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Divisive issues force Episcopal Church General Convention to grapple with the meaning of community

by Jeffrey Penn and James Solheim

A caravan of 1,100 deputies and bishops from 121 dioceses, attending the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, journeyed into a legislative wilderness and attempted to set the course of the church for the next three years and beyond. Sometimes the temperature of the debate inside the Phoenix Civic Plaza during the 10-day meeting matched the sizzling heat outside -- particularly as the church turned to sexuality issues.

Many came to Phoenix with suitcases filled with frustration and fear that the church was coming apart at the seams. Others recognized the deep divisions, but felt confident that God would lead the people out of the desert. Some came prepared to push the racism issue and protest holding the convention in a state without a paid holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. Others were excited that the church was ready to lend its moral energy to the environmental movement.

Special interest groups in the church had threatened to scatter from Phoenix like wandering nomads if their expectations were not met. Would the church fragment into lost tribes, or stay together as a community even if the promised land were nowhere in sight?

In that complicated mix of fears and hopes, deputies and bishops would endure a messy legislative process poorly equipped to handle a crushing agenda of concerns -- too much of it eventually brushed aside as the convention lurched toward a conclusion.

In his sermon at the opening service, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said he anticipated an angry and noisy convention but added that was a sign of health. "Do not make the mistake of thinking that the presence of anger here in this meeting is a sign that the church is in danger. The presence of anger is a sign that the church is alive," and the noise will be "the noise of growth." He said the convention would reveal the church "in all its glory and with every last one of its warts," and that the convention would move through the huge volume of legislation "like an elephant in ballet slippers."

Sexuality issue bursts on the scene early

Like a desert storm that appears from nowhere, the sexuality issue burst into the General Convention on the second day. A sharp exchange between two bishops threatened the House of Bishops' ability to withstand the gathering storm of controversy expected on sexuality issues.

It took an unprecedented six closed-door, executive sessions to produce a climate in which the bishops could deal with the issues. "It was critical that we did this," said Bishop Christopher

Epting of Iowa. "This church was in a crisis in the first days of this convention."

"We are trying to clear the air, to debate the issues before us," said Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning -- to deal with the anger, confusion, and frustration "we have had with one another over the past couple of years."

Although there were forecasts that an open hearing on sexuality could disrupt the convention, many of the 3,000 people assembled left with the sense that it had been a productive and informative meeting. "When people talk together you never know the outcome," said Bishop Otis Charles, dean of Episcopal Divinity School. "The people speaking were sharing what was deep and important to them in their lives. My hope is that out of the convention we can hold the whole together."

Faced with the clear option of leaving the ordination of noncelibate homosexuals to local dioceses, or of writing a canon law prohibiting sexual expression outside of Holy Matrimony, the convention chose neither.

Although the storm never completely dissipated during the 10-day convention, the clouds broke long enough to adopt a compromise that:

- affirms the church's traditional teaching on marriage,
- acknowledges the "discontinuity" between the church's teaching and the experience of some of its members,
- confesses the inability of church leaders to reach a definitive conclusion, and
- calls for continued study on the local level and a "pastoral teaching" by the bishops with input from clergy and laity at the grass-roots level.

The compromise emerged from the House of Bishops Committee on Ministry and was amended by the House of Deputies.

Reactions to the compromise clearly indicated that the issue was far from settled. Bishop Clarence Pope of Fort Worth, president of the Episcopal Synod of America, a traditionalist group, called the compromise "a positive sign" by affirming traditional sexual morality. "That's the only real positive -- that it affirms traditional belief," Pope added. "It doesn't stop the problem of continuing ordination of practicing homosexuals. It has no teeth in it."

Bishop William Frey, dean of Trinity Episcopal School for the Ministry, who proposed the canon, said that he does not view the compromise as either a victory or defeat for either conservative or liberal elements of the church. "I don't think we've lost any ground," Frey said. "We've simply exposed to public view a fact many people have suspected -- that the leadership of the church is, at present, incapable of giving leadership in this particular area."

On the other hand, Bishop Frederick Borsch of Los Angeles defended the compromise resolution, saying, "The bishops weren't wimping out with this resolution. You saw a house with different minds on the issue strike out with integrity. In the long run the debates have helped

people see that here's a church that wants to love with mind along with heart, to really -- in a thoughtful and prayerful way -- look at the great issues of our time, such as sexuality."

Lingering concern about racism

Another storm cloud gathering on the eve of the convention was the church's willingness to address its own racism. Many deputies and bishops arrived with lingering doubts about the wisdom of meeting in a state without a paid holiday honoring slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.

As they gathered in the first legislative sessions in both houses, a substantial number of bishops and deputies declared that they were "present under protest." In an effort to address the anger and frustration, the entire convention participated in a racism audit -- "an institutional CAT scan," according to Diane Porter, interim executive of the church's Office of Advocacy, Witness, and Justice Ministries, and staff liaison to the Standing Commission on Racism. Porter said that the 58-question audit was designed to sensitize participants to both personal and institutional racism, and to serve as a data baseline for church programming for the next 20 years.

"We have lots of perceptions, but we don't have actual facts," said Porter. The Rev. Harry Nevels, Jr., a deputy from Ohio, said the church's growing awareness of its cultural and ethnic diversity is relatively new. The purpose of the audit and the church's other efforts, he said, is "to develop a common ground on which to talk" since "we are talking about different cultural expressions of a truth."

In a presentation of the audit's results, Dr. Lennox Joseph, a consultant who helped to design the audit, said that the results indicated "a clear mandate that the church must press on with its work on racism. There is a clear signal from the Episcopal Church that new programs should be developed to encourage the explicit recognition and appreciation of racial differences within the church," he said.

Porter contends that the results of the audit "portend an openness to change and a willingness to engage this issue seriously." She added that the audit demonstrates "that the church is ready to get on with being an inclusive community."

In responding to the results, the presiding bishop said he would do all in his power to assure that the church take racism seriously and "combat institutional racism at every level."

The Rev. Joseph Pelham of Massachusetts agreed that church leaders must now "pin down the accountability question." Pelham, speaking for The Consultation, a umbrella for 20 social activist groups, said that there is "a difference between good intentions and solid actions."

Bishop Herbert Thompson of Southern Ohio expressed his disappointment that a convention dedicated to issues of racism left so many resolutions until the closing hours. "Such

delayed attention is inconsistent with what we've said," he said. "What we do here is what is significant."

Although not all the resolutions on racism were dealt with in the crush of the legislative process, several emerged that will have long-range effects on the church. One resolution, for example, dedicated the Episcopal Church to spend the next nine years "addressing institutional racism inside our church and in society." Another urged each diocese and local congregation to conduct a similar racism audit. And another urged each diocese to establish a commission or committee on racism.

Perhaps the most tangible decision around the issue of racism was the establishment of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy Scholarship Fund. The fund will provide scholarships for ethnic minority students.

Native American presence is 'centerpiece' of convention

The original intent to lift up the presence of Native American ministry in the Episcopal Church was almost lost in the storm of controversy over the choice of Phoenix as the site for the convention. Bishop Steven Plummer of the Navajoland Area Mission reminded the convention that Native Americans share with other Christians the same spirit, a belief that "the earth is our mother and the heaven is our father."

In the opening Eucharist of the convention, Navajo chant and prayer blessed the huge worship space and spawned a vision of reconciliation that would be woven throughout the entire convention.

During the daily Eucharists, deputies and bishops seated at 300 round tables served one another from newly designed ceramic chalices and patens made by Navajo craftspeople. The altar cloth and vestments incorporated a variety of traditional symbols. Banners of white, yellow, blue, and black -- traditional Native American colors for the points of the compass -- decked the walls of the worship area. Participants were assigned to tables at random by computer, in what the Rev. Charles Cesaretti, project coordinator, called "an attempt to build another community here, gathered around bread, wine, and Scripture."

In a centerpiece worship service on Saturday, a "holy ground ceremony" brought together representatives of 20 tribes who mixed soils from their homelands symbolizing the mixing of two cultures, "to become a new creation of strength, wisdom, hope, and joy," in the words of Bishop Steven Charleston, a Choctaw who is the new bishop of Alaska.

A litany of pain

Following the traditional Native American invocation that addressed the four compass points, several participants bore witness to the pain of the 500-year encounter with European

culture and offered prayers for reconciliation. Several recited a sobering litany of massacre, slavery, eviction, and assimilation, but dispelled the assumption that Indians are a vanished people.

In one of the more dramatic moments in the service, nearly 80 Native Americans, slow-stepping to the rhythm of the Lakota drum team, Morning Star, circled the altar platform. A Native American youth led the processional carrying a staff bearing a medicine wheel hoop. The hoop is significant to Indian Christians, explained the Rev. Mark MacDonald, one of the ceremony's coordinators, because it is both a cross and a circle. A cross splits the hoop's interior into four sections which, he said, can represent to Native Americans the four ages of life, the four virtues (wisdom, courage, honesty, and bravery), or the four elements (earth, wind, water, and fire).

In a period of intercession, the presiding bishop and Rosebud Sioux Martin Brokenleg read prayers that used the circle as a motif. "Let us remember that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Great Spirit always works in circles, and everything tries to be round," read Brokenleg. "In the old days it was believed that all power came to the Indian from the sacred hoop of the nation and tribe, and so long as the hoop was unbroken the people flourished."

But the hoop has been broken, read Browning, "broken by hurts, wars, massacres, discrimination, and racial jokes; by stereotypes and mean words and suspicious stares. . . Now is the time to say 'I'm sorry' to each other and to our Creator and again make our hoop, our circle, strong."

Church embraces environmental movement

With a group of Lakota and Navajo young people singing "On Eagles' Wings," a setting of Psalm 91, the House of Deputies Committee on the Environment introduced a package of resolutions, including measures establishing a national Environmental Stewardship Team and opposing oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Committee chair Joyce McConnell of Olympia told the deputies the joint committees of both houses heard five main messages in the testimony they received at the open hearing.

- "Don't put the responsibility on someone else's desk" -- meaning the whole church must be involved in caring for the environment.
- "Don't try to develop a theological statement at General Convention" -- leave it to the wider church -- a lesson that likely grew out of confrontations at the open hearings and elsewhere over the orthodoxy of the doctrine of *panentheism*, the idea that God is present in all creation. Some believe that doctrine is uncomfortably close to *pantheism*, the concept that God and creation are one.
- "Get a structure in place" to deal with environmental issues.
- "Don't bring a mishmash of resolutions to the floor" -- act on "one good one."

- "Use the expertise and gifts" of Episcopalians who care about the environment.

Environmental solutions must be rooted in biblical tradition

In a major address at the open hearing, Archbishop Michael Peers of the Anglican Church of Canada warned the Episcopal Church not to get bogged down in the "luxury of correcting each other's theology while the planet continues to die."

Peers emphasized that the crisis in the world's biosphere isn't merely one of scientific or technological import, but a spiritual crisis as well, a religious problem with its roots in "human sinfulness . . . rebellion against God as source and mystery of all created life." Pointing to the merits of various approaches to the problem, from feminist theology to aboriginal traditions, Peers warned against falling into two of what he called "opposite temptations" in the debate on the environment. One is a stark utilitarianism, viewing the earth as a resource to be exploited; the other is a "romantic cult of nature" that seeks to turn the world into a "global wilderness park." Neither, says Peers, is consistent with Christian faith rooted in the biblical tradition.

The convention adopted what McConnell described as "the beginning of teamwork" for education, advocacy, and action in the church on the environment: the creation of an Environmental Stewardship Team, a 14-member "interdisciplinary, multicultural" group selected by the presiding bishop and the president of the House of Deputies from each province of the church. Funded by a \$100,000 line item in the program budget, the team will report to the Executive Council during the next three years and to the General Convention in 1994.

Convention addresses laundry list of issues

In the midst of debates on major issues, the convention attempted to address a laundry list of national and international issues. Among the major domestic issues were abortion, medical ethics, domestic violence, economic justice, and aging.

On some issues the two houses clearly diverged. The House of Deputies supported exploration of peaceful uses of nuclear power as a way to "protect the environment, reduce dependence on foreign powers, and assure the quality of American life." Bishops, on the other hand, rejected the resolution out of a concern for the radioactive waste created by the nuclear industry.

Attempts to expand the church's 1988 statement on abortion bounced back and forth between the two houses. A strong resolution by the deputies opposed any governmental restriction on "the right of a woman to reach informed decision about termination of pregnancy." At the conclusion of convention, bishops failed to concur with the resolution. However, both houses approved a resolution opposing laws requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions.

In a direct outgrowth of the emphasis on economic justice inaugurated at the 1988 General

Convention, both houses concurred to establish an independent National Episcopal Housing Corporation.

Among the international issues creating the most heat were attempts to commend or condemn the Bush Administration's Persian Gulf policy. Ultimately, resolutions praising Bush and U.S. military leadership during the crisis were shot down.

Resolutions on the Middle East that supported the rights of the Palestinians and criticized Israeli policy stirred strong reactions and drew sharp criticism from a representative of the American Jewish Committee (AJC). After the General Convention declared its support for an international peace conference to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Rabbi Robert Kravitz of the AJC delivered a stinging rebuke, expressing "keen disappointment with the tone, substance, and the timing of the major Middle East resolutions and their lack of fairness. . . We respond to your resolutions sadly, with a heavy heart. They are unfair and unbalanced and will not be helpful in the peace process."

In declaring its support for the Church of the Province of South Africa, the General Convention endorsed comprehensive sanctions against the government South Africa. The convention also urged the U.S. government to press for a negotiated settlement that would bring an end to the present violence in South Africa caused by political and factional fighting.

Internal issues

While demonstrating its eagerness to deal with weighty national and international issues, the convention dealt with internal issues that help shape the life and ministry of the church. For example, it declined to repeal the so-called "Episcopal Visitors" resolution, adopted in 1988, that provides episcopal oversight to parishes that oppose the ordination of women to the priesthood.

The House of Bishops rejected an attempt to deny the vote to retired bishops. The convention also passed far-reaching legislation affecting pensions for lay employees at all levels of the church.

After several days of parliamentary maneuvering, the House of Bishops rejected a canonical proposal granting equal access to the ordination process

The convention approved a resolution requesting that the Council for the Development of Ministry and the Standing Liturgical Commission study the concept of "direct ordination" and report to the next General Convention. If the concept is approved, candidates could be ordained directly to the orders of priest or bishop without an intermediate ordination to the diaconate.

Deputies and bishops also concurred on a canonical change decreasing the number of bishops required to call for the ecclesiastical trial of a bishop for teaching doctrine contrary to that of the Episcopal Church. The new canon will require one-quarter of the active bishops in the church rather than two-thirds -- or nearly 75 bishops rather than nearly 200, in the current house.

Attempted censure re-ignites debate on collegiality

In the final hours of the legislative sessions, there were clear reminders that many of the most explosive issues of this General Convention would continue to threaten the peace of the church until the 1994 convention in Indianapolis.

The House of Bishops was drawn into an attempt to censure two bishops -- Ronald Haines of Washington (D.C) and Walter Righter, former assisting bishop in Newark -- for recent ordinations of noncelibate homosexuals. The resolution, proposed by retired Bishop Gerald McAllister of Oklahoma, stirred a whirlwind of controversy over collegiality and the responsibility of bishops to each other.

McAllister warned that the issue was "one of ordering the household of faith." He said failure to censure would "destroy the fabric of our community life."

In the end a majority of bishops disagreed with McAllister and passed a resolution that expressed the mind of the House of Bishops, recognizing "the pain and damage to the collegiality and credibility of this house and to parts of the whole church when individual bishops and dioceses ordain sexually active gay and lesbian persons in the face of repeated statements of this House of Bishops and the General Convention against such ordinations."

The resolution goes on to "acknowledge the dilemma of conscience faced by each member of this House of Bishops resulting from these ordinations and from the fact that there is no clear consensus in this House of Bishops." The issues swirling around sexuality and collegiality will be high on the agenda of a special meeting of the House of Bishops in March.

Just as they were leaving on the final day of the convention, deputies and bishops were handed a graphic reminder that the future would continue to be clouded on major issues. An "Open Letter to the People of the Episcopal Church" from the Episcopal Synod of America expressed deep fears for a church "which affirms biblical truths, but cannot discipline those who reject them."

"We continue to pray and work for reconciliation, but must recognize the radical, theological divorce between us," the statement said.

'Dream boldly for this church'

As one deputy said, waiting for her cab to the airport, "I'm still not sure what we did here and what it means for the future of my church. But one thing I will carry away with me is the presiding bishop's challenge to 'dream boldly for this church.'

"His call for an inclusive and compassionate church where none feel excluded just because they are different is exactly the kind of challenge I can take home," she added.

As other deputies and bishops began their journey homeward, questions remained about whether they were a community united in a common purpose. Was the fragile peace they helped

patch together in Phoenix a further testimony to God's grace? Would their church ever reach consensus on controversial issues? How does the church cling to its deepest sense of community in the face of disagreement?

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News background

How the General Convention reached a compromise on the sexuality issue

by Mike Barwell

After months of anticipation and a week of legislative maneuvering, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church finally reached a compromise on the explosive issue of sexuality.

Following some last-minute haggling, the House of Deputies concurred with the House of Bishops' final, editorial amendments to the resolution (A-104sa) the bishops had crafted and approved earlier. The deputies ratified the resolution in an overwhelming voice vote.

The bishops agreed with the deputies' editorial amendments of the resolution, but insisted that the resolution retain language stating "that this General Convention *affirms* (rather than "acknowledges") that the teaching of the Episcopal Church is that physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the lifelong, monogamous" relationship of marriage, as defined in the Book of Common Prayer.

The bishops' resolution -- which amounts to a compromise package intended to keep the church from polarizing on sexuality issues -- affirms traditional definitions of marriage, acknowledges the "discontinuity" between the church's teaching and the experience of some of its members, and confesses the inability of church leaders to reach a definitive conclusion. It also calls for continued study on the local level and a "pastoral teaching" from the bishops.

The compromise resolution now becomes church policy -- at least for the next three years.

Text of final resolution:

General Convention affirms that the teaching of the Episcopal Church is that physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the lifelong, monogamous "union of husband and wife in the heart, body, and mind intended by God for their

mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord," as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer; and be it further resolved,

That this church continue to work to reconcile the discontinuity between this teaching and the experience of many members of this body; and be it further resolved,

That this General Convention confesses our failure to lead and to resolve this discontinuity through legislative efforts based upon resolutions directed at singular and various aspects of these issues; and be it further resolved,

That this General Convention commissions the bishops and members of each diocesan deputation to initiate a means for all congregations in their jurisdiction to enter into dialogue and deepen their understanding of these complex issues; and further this General Convention directs the president of each province to appoint one bishop, one lay deputy, and one clerical deputy in that province to facilitate the process, to receive reports from the dioceses at each meeting of their Provincial Synod, and report to the 71st General Convention; and be it further resolved,

That this General Convention directs the House of Bishops to prepare a Pastoral Teaching prior to the 71st General Convention using the learnings from the diocesan and provincial processes and calling upon such insight as is necessary from theologians, theological ethicists, social scientists, and gay and lesbian persons; and that three lay persons and three members of the clergy from the House of Deputies, appointed by the President of the House of Deputies, be included in the preparation of this Pastoral Teaching.

Canon on sexual behavior defeated

In a series of debates and votes earlier in the convention, the deputies considered three resolutions dealing with sexuality: the compromise resolution, a new canon or church law on clergy sexual behavior, and a canon on access to the ordination process.

In their first vote, deputies defeated a proposed canon insisting that clergy "abstain from genital sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony" (B-003).

In a vote by orders, the deputies killed the proposal, initiated by Bishop William C. Frey, that had already been discharged from consideration by the bishops. Frey is dean of the Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

In a statement Thursday, Frey said, "I didn't really expect that it would pass. I wasn't overly optimistic. The fact it didn't pass doesn't convince me I was wrong in making the proposal.

"In all likelihood I'll be back in three years with something similar," Frey added. "My guess is that by that time we'll have enough experience to make it more attractive."

Frey commented that he personally does not view the sexuality legislation approved by convention as either a victory or defeat for either conservative or liberal elements of the church. "I don't think we've lost any ground," Frey said. "We've simply exposed to public view a fact many people have suspected -- that the leadership of the church is, at present, incapable of giving leadership in this particular area."

After amending and adopting the compromise resolution from the House of Bishops, deputies also adopted an amendment to Title III, Canon 8 stating simply, "There is no right to ordination in the Church. Subject to specified canonical requirements, all members shall have equal access to the selection process for ordination in this Church."

Defeat of canon prompts protests

The deputies' defeat of Frey's proposed canon produced a swift reaction.

The Very Rev. John Rodgers, deputy from the Diocese of Pittsburgh and former dean of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, read from a prepared statement: "I wish to inform you and this House of Deputies that I and many other deputies and alternate deputies remain seated in this convention as loyal Episcopalians under protest and in order to protest." His remarks to Dean David C. Collins, president of the house, were delivered "in the light of this House's unwillingness to affirm biblical and classical Anglican sexual morality as having canonical standing in our church."

The Rev. Todd Wetzel, executive director for Episcopalians United for Revelation, Renewal and Reformation, a conservative organization, said, "We're pleased that the passage of [the compromise resolution] affirms the church's traditional teaching. But we're distressed that neither the House of Bishops nor the House of Deputies could pass a canon stating that clergy should refrain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony."

Episcopalians United reacted to the decision in its publication *United Voice*, saying members of the independent organization -- which made "blocking more gay ordinations or the further use of Supplemental Liturgical Texts" major platforms at this convention -- were "disappointed but unbroken."

In the same publication, Bishop C. FitzSimons Allison, retired bishop of South Carolina, said that convention's "stymied discussion of sexuality may be evidence of God's wrath." Allison described that wrath as "a church meeting from which God has withdrawn his Holy Spirit."

Integrity has mixed reaction

Integrity, an organization of gay and lesbian Episcopalians, expressed mixed reaction to the passage of the compromise legislation. While Integrity was pleased with the overall mood of the convention, and appreciative of the positive remarks made during debates on the floor of both houses, spokespersons voiced "disappointment that more positive legislation did not pass." Integrity also said that, although "the language . . . was not what was hoped for, it is a position that Integrity can live with."

Kim Byham, director of communications for Integrity, said the "specific and intentional inclusion of gay and lesbian persons in the study process was a great step forward for this

church." He also expressed Integrity's "frustration that the resolution seeks once again to study homosexuality.

"If the issue were race, the church would not be studying persons of color, but rather would study racism," Byham said. "We as gay and lesbian Christians would be much more interested . . . if we would start to discuss heterosexism rather than sexuality."

Not done without pain

The decision to affirm traditional definitions of marriage, at the same time admitting the pain of homosexuals in the church, was not an easy compromise.

How the church would deal with sexuality had galvanized and at times polarized the church for more than a decade. At issue was the authority of Scripture, the rights of individuals to access to the ordination process, and the authority of dioceses and bishops to ordain homosexuals.

The current debate over the church's policy toward gay and lesbian members began in 1976, when a General Convention resolution acknowledged "that homosexual persons are children of God and have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the church." Yet, a 1977 statement from the Committee on Theology in the House of Bishops said that it was "crucial to distinguish between an advocating and/or practicing -- willful and habitual -- homosexual and one with a dominant homosexual orientation only." The bishops also adopted a statement that declared ordination was inadmissible for an avowed homosexual.

The 1979 General Convention followed the lead of the bishops with a bench mark resolution that affirmed traditional teachings of the church on marriage, marital fidelity, and sexual chastity as standards for Christian sexual morality and declared that it was "not appropriate" to ordain a practicing homosexual. However, 44 bishops subsequently signed a public statement of dissent from the resolution declaring that they would not be bound by the resolution as a matter of conscience.

It was not until the 1985 General Convention in Anaheim that an attempt was made to reexamine the question of ordaining gay and lesbian candidates. A change designed to eliminate sexual orientation as a criteria for "rights and status in the church" was approved by each house in slightly different language, but failed to become canon law because of a case of miscommunication between the two houses. A similar change designed to eliminate sexual orientation as a criteria for access to the ordination process was adopted by the House of Bishops but not by the House of Deputies.

The 1988 General Convention in Detroit rejected specific measures to ordain homosexuals, instead calling for a thorough study of human sexuality and hoping for disposition at this convention. Last January, the Standing Commission on Human Affairs released the so-called

Hunt Commission report, named for Bishop George Hunt of Rhode Island who chaired the committee during the past three years. The lengthy report was based on three years of study, including a series of regional hearings with extensive testimony from homosexuals and traditionalists.

Some observers felt the commission's recommendations added fuel to the fire by asserting that individual dioceses and bishops alone should determine the fitness of candidates for ordination, including open homosexuals. The Hunt report also called for the Standing Liturgical Commission to study the issues and forms for blessing same-sex relationships.

Gay ordinations spurred reactions

The ordination of an avowed, noncelibate homosexual to the priesthood in December 1989 by Bishop John Spong of Newark, New Jersey, sharpened the questions regarding the ordination of gay and lesbian candidates. The ordination fueled heated reaction throughout the church and initiated attempts by some to bring charges against Spong for violating the spirit of the 1979 resolution. Although the 1990 meeting of the House of Bishops narrowly voted to "disassociate" from Spong's ordination of the gay priest, the question regarding the binding authority of the 1979 resolution was a continuing bone of contention.

At the conclusion of the 1990 meeting, the bishops adopted a "Statement on Homosexuality" that called for continued dialogue on the issue, noting that "no matter how deeply each of us may feel about homosexuality, there are other people of good faith who also take seriously the authority of Scripture and may conclude differently." The bishops urged the church to approach the continuing dialogue with patience, warning that "this may be especially difficult for those who expect early resolution, an up-or-down vote at the forthcoming General Convention."

Then on June 5, 1991 -- only a few weeks before convention -- the ordination of Elizabeth Carl, a noncelibate lesbian, by Bishop Ronald Haines of Washington, D.C., further fueled the controversy.

Strong passions brought to convention

The sexuality debate heightened the anxieties of traditionalists, conservatives and evangelicals, who claim the church is slipping away from orthodox Christianity. Organizations such as Episcopalians United and the Episcopal Synod of America within the past year focused much of their energy and resources to oppose legislation that would allow ordination of homosexuals.

At the same time, the Frey proposal sought to broaden the scope, including all sexual conduct of clergy. Frey and others testified that they had "more trouble with their heterosexual clergy" than with gays or lesbians -- although they opposed ordaining gays.

All of these passions arrived at convention, along with considerable press scrutiny. Sparks flew early in the House of Bishops. On July 12, Spong and Bishop John H. MacNaughton of West Texas exchanged heated words over a proposal to appoint homosexual members to the Standing Commission on Human Affairs. Spong accused certain bishops of being "homophobic."

Bishop Arthur E. Walmsley of Connecticut, likening the brief exchange to "a foretaste of the shoot-out at the OK Corral," called on Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning to set a time "to discuss how we do our business together." In response, Browning called a special "executive session" to deal with the collegiality and trust level among the bishops.

Bishop Frank Allan of Atlanta, chair of the House of Bishops Committee on Ministry, said his committee proposed the executive session because "I think we are facing a crisis of leadership and trust, and also in the way that we do business with one another as bishops." Allan admitted "that I came to this convention with a great deal of dread." While he said "I have found here a great deal of collegiality" and was "far more encouraged than when I came here," he said it would still be helpful to "come together in executive session to talk about how we relate to each other and how we do business."

Sexuality hearing 'tame'

The long-awaited hearing on issues surrounding sexuality drew almost 3,000 participants. The open hearing included statements and testimonies pertaining to pending legislation on the ordination of noncelibate homosexuals and blessing same-sex committed relationships.

Bishop Frederick H. Borsch of Los Angeles, a member of the Hunt Commission, supported the report's conclusion that decisions about ordaining homosexuals should be left to individual dioceses.

Borsch contended that there is much that is agreed by members of the church about sexuality. "At least most of us are agreed that [homosexual] orientation itself is no bar for full discipleship and leadership roles in our church," he said. "The church historically has often dealt with significant issues locally, and this may in our time be both a more pastoral way and a better way."

"I believe that at least most of us are agreed that there is a certain mystery about homosexuality," Borsch continued. "The homosexual orientation, with respect to its causes and purposes, is not fully explicable or understandable in special ways."

"Many, though not all, would agree that the general sexual orientation of most people cannot be changed," Borsch said. "Gay and lesbian persons, in other words, are a given among and with us, in our lives and world, often in our families, certainly in our churches, often as our friends and co-disciples."

Bishop Frey, on the other hand, claimed, "We've sinned as a church, and I believe we are

under God's judgment. We have sinned by silence and acquiescence in going along with the sexual revolution."

Stating that he has a vision of the church in which "the love of God and not the indulgence of God" would be expressed, Frey reminded the attentive listeners who filled rows of folding chairs that the love of God is "a severe mercy," for the Lord "disciplines those whom he loves."

The battle is not over. Some observers suggest that no one is really satisfied with the General Convention's actions on sexuality, and the ultimate resolution of this issue will emerge from the grass-roots study by congregations and dioceses.

Convention passed other resolutions on sexuality issues, which now become the policy of the church:

- Declare sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment by church employees an abuse of trust and responsibility (B-052a).
- Ask the president of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop to appoint to the Standing Commission on Human Affairs membership having representation from the communities and groups being most affected by the agenda of the triennium (D-016a).
- Initiate an inter-Anglican and ecumenical dialogue on human sexuality issues which should not be resolved by the Episcopal Church on its own (B-020).
- Work to educate parishes about sexual abuse (D-105s).
- Provide education and information for clergy ministering to the gay and lesbian community (D-049s).

91150

'Clear pattern of institutional racism' emerges from convention audit

by Mike Barwell and David Skidmore

The numbers are in, and it appears the church has some catching-up to do.

Deputies and bishops to the 70th General Convention learned the results of a racism audit, conducted during the second day of convention, indicating that the church is not paying adequate attention to the problem of racism -- at least in the eyes of those surveyed.

The racism issue was brought to the forefront of General Convention months before bishops and deputies descended on Phoenix. Last November -- after Arizona voters defeated two

conflicting ballot issues to establish a statewide paid holiday honoring slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. -- a number of leaders called for a boycott of Phoenix and demanded that the convention be moved.

During months of consulting with black leaders, the Executive Council, and other constituencies, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning maintained that coming to Phoenix presented "a gift from God" and a chance to witness against racism.

Included in the agreement to remain in Phoenix were establishing the Martin Luther King, Jr., Legacy Scholarship Fund to support minority students, focusing on racism in daily Bible study and worship, lifting up Native American ministry, and conducting a racism audit.

Despite the intense focus, 35 of the 143 bishops declared during roll call that they were "present under protest," and a large number of deputies at the opening session signed a statement charging that the "church had turned against its people of color."

By the end of the 10-day gathering, attitudes had changed and participants left with a clearer picture of racial attitudes in the Episcopal Church.

Part of that clearer picture was the result of the racial audit.

'Clear pattern of racism'

"Based on the findings, we have a clear pattern of institutional racism emerging," Dr. Lennox Joseph told an estimated 1,000 deputies, bishops, and visitors gathered in the House of Deputies meeting hall a week after taking the hour-long, 58-question survey.

In response, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning pledged that he would do all in his power to assure that "this church take seriously that which we have stated that we want to do, and that is to combat institutional racism at every level."

The most significant question raised by the panel, Browning said, was one of accountability, which rests with church leaders at every level. He vowed he would demonstrate his own accountability by ensuring that any resolutions dealing with racism "be brought forward as quickly as possible so that this convention can have the opportunity to decide on them without question."

Deputies and bishops did respond, although to some it seemed late in the game.

While the bishops concurred with several resolutions directly related to racism issues, Bishop Herbert Thompson of Southern Ohio expressed his disappointment that "we dealt with this at this stage of the convention when there are so few of us here." Many bishops had already left the hall during the final day as convention struggled to deal with an avalanche of legislation overwhelming both houses.

For a convention dedicated to issues of racism, such delayed attention is "inconsistent with what we've said," Thompson said. "What we *do* here is what is significant."

Racism in fabric of church

The findings in the audit provided a significant clue regarding the church's success or failure to deal with racial issues since the civil rights era 30 years ago.

"I call it an institutional CAT scan that we can use to see where we are at this particular point in the church," said Diane Porter, interim executive of the church's Office of Advocacy, Witness, and Justice Ministries and staff to the Commission on Racism.

The question format, said Porter, was intended to elicit the personal experiences and attitudes of the bishops and deputies toward racism. Combatting institutional racism requires personal intervention, she added. "We have a lot of perceptions," Porter said, "but we don't have actual facts."

Dr. Lennox Joseph, chief executive for National Training Laboratories Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences (NTLIABS), and Dr. Clay Alderfer, a consultant to NTLIABS and a professor of organizational behavior at Yale, spent the first hour of the hearing reviewing the findings of 14 of the audit's 58 statements. The 14 statements were selected according to the extent they embraced issues in other statements. "The ones we picked," said Alderfer "were the most representative of all the items."

Both Joseph and Alderfer agreed that racism was woven in the fabric of the church and that the key issue was what the church was going to do about it. "There is a clear mandate there that the church must press on with its work on racism," said Joseph. "The Episcopal Church is not considered to be moving directly with its work on racism. There is a clear signal from this community that new programs should be developed to encourage the explicit recognition and appreciation of racial and ethnic differences within the church."

Good intentions or solid action?

Deputy Antoinette Daniels of New Jersey -- who led the protest on the opening day in the House of Deputies -- observed, "I think it's interesting that they said the church is racist; it's a racist institution. But we want to do something about it."

There's a willingness and openness to acknowledge the church has a problem, said the Rev. Joseph Pelham, the African-American convenor of The Consultation, an umbrella organization for 20 Episcopal social activist groups. Pelham noted, however, that there is a "difference between good intentions and solid action."

Pelham said the great divergence in attitudes between white and blacks, a condition the audit revealed, was, "very troubling, especially in light of the fact that the real power in the church and the decisions made there are by whites, especially white males." There is now a need for intentional action from the church's leaders, Pelham said, "to pin down the accountability question. We need to design responses that will get at the issue of behavior of persons."

Results 'gratifying'

The audit results were presented in a 21-page report distributed to the audience prior to the hearing. Following their presentation, an eight-member panel, representing white, African-American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American members, shared their reactions to the audit.

The audit and analysis was faulted by some panel members and observers for shortchanging Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. Carlos Zervignon said lumping Hispanics into one category led to misleading conclusions. Hispanics are not a people of color, he said, but of "a whole spectrum of colors, from very, very fair to very, very dark." Answers, he said, reflected an amalgamation of people of various colors, and this may have painted Hispanics as overly conservative.

The truth is that Province IX (incorporating dioceses in Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean) is doing everything it can to support cultural diversity, said Zervignon, adding, "I want my black colleagues not to jump to conclusions about who we are." He also faulted the audit analysis for listing gender only for white and black responses.

The Rev. Phil Allen, a Sioux deputy from Minnesota who was attending the hearing as an observer, said the Native American responses to statement 10 -- "The Episcopal Church is called to fight for cultural diversity" -- were skewed because of a single word. Only 68 percent of Native Americans, the lowest of any group, agreed with the statement.

"I think their response was low because of the word 'fight,'" said Allen. "We are peaceful. We go out peacefully. We don't fight. It's a negative reaction. Now if they had said 'to really work for racial justice,' or whatever, then it would have been very high."

Despite criticisms of the audit, the results were "gratifying," Porter said. The outcome "portends an openness to change and a willingness to engage this issue seriously." It also shows "that the church is ready to get on with being an inclusive community," she said.

What now?

Despite the criticisms, the findings were clear enough to raise the issue to new importance in the life of the church. All of the strife and anxiety about coming to Phoenix and witnessing against racism also may have long-range effects.

According to Thompson -- one of the only black bishops who sided with the presiding bishop in the decision to stay in Phoenix -- black leadership in the church may have learned an important but hard lesson. "The politics of protest no longer work," he said. "We need to find a new and better way to carry forward our concerns, along with our Indian brothers and sisters."

In the end, bishops and deputies were encouraged to take back to their dioceses the message that more work needs to be done, and many attitudes still need to be changed.

The following resolutions related to racism and ethnic concerns were adopted as church policy:

Racism

- Dedicate the Episcopal Church to spend the next nine years "addressing institutional racism inside our church and in society (D-113a).
- Endorse the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund, providing funds for African-American and Native American and other minority students (A-241a).
- Instruct interim bodies of the General Convention to explore how racism, sexism, and other discrimination may limit their work (A-085a).
- Mandate that Episcopal clergy abstain from racism (B-051s).
- Urge dioceses to implement and to strengthen initiatives with all congregations toward becoming a church of and for all races. (D-043a)
- Urge each diocese and local congregation to conduct an audit on institutional racism in its life and work (A-199).
- Urge each diocese to establish a commission or committee on racism, and include persons of racial or ethnic diversity in appointments to diocesan commissions and committees (A-082s).
- Endorse and support in 1992 the national bicentennial celebration, "200 Years of the Black Presence in the Episcopal Church" (D-149a).

Native Americans

- Celebrate the survival of Native Americans (D-179).
- Support efforts at local, state, and national levels to protect the Native American Church's right to practice its religion in light of a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision denying the right to sacramental use of peyote (C-069).
- Support new directions in American Indian ministries (B-002a).
- Call on Congress to create a Special Presidential Commission on treaty and civil rights of American Indians, and that the church advocate for fair and prompt settlement of Indian claims (C-041s).

Hispanic Ministry

- Extend grant to Hispanic Scholarship Trust Fund (C-052).
- Request appointment of a blue-ribbon task force on Hispanic ministries (C-049a).

Asiamerican Ministry

- Direct the Asiamerican Ministry Office to recruit and support ethnic Asian leadership (D-166).
- Strengthen the development of Asian congregations in the Episcopal Church (D-168).

91151

Critics charge church's response to environment includes procrastination and pantheism

by Jan Nunley

Warning the Episcopal Church not to get bogged down in the "the luxury of correcting each other's theology while the planet continues to die," Archbishop Michael Peers of the Anglican Church of Canada opened the debate about the environmental crisis at General Convention. Deputies and bishops took up the ongoing, churchwide discussion with legislation that creates a team to craft specific responses to the environmental crisis.

Speaking to an open hearing on the environment, Peers set the tone and touched on many of the issues that would be raised again in testimony from the floor. Commenting after the speech, Peers observed that environmental concerns were often used to score theological and ideological points "on both sides of the issue. I have a sense that that's what's happening here, and it distresses me. We don't have a lot of time. And we will be judged for what we do."

Statements in response to Peers' speech from the Episcopal Environmental Coalition, the Executive Council, and the Irenaeus Fellowship, among others, revealed the tensions inherent in formulating an action plan for the church.

Crisis of 'sinfulness'

Peers emphasized that the crisis in the world's biosphere isn't merely one of scientific or technological import, but a spiritual crisis as well, a religious problem with its roots in "human sinfulness . . . rebellion against God as source and mystery of all created life." Pointing to the merits of various approaches to the problem, from feminist theology to aboriginal traditions, Peers warned against falling into "opposite temptations" in the debate on the environment. One is a stark utilitarianism, viewing the earth as a resource to be exploited; the other is a "romantic cult of nature" that seeks to turn the world into a "global wilderness park." Neither, says Peers, is consistent with Christian faith rooted in the biblical tradition.

Peers called for environmental education in the parish, political action in communities, and changes in life styles and consuming habits. He particularly targeted Americans as leaders in setting world standards with regard to environmental use. He pointed out that if the U.S. doesn't change its ways with regard to water use, it may be forced to ask Canada -- with most of North America's fresh water -- to help out. To much nervous laughter from the predominantly American audience, Peers asked, "When you come asking, what should our response be: 'Clean up your act, reform your life style, and then we'll share?'"

Flawed by pagan heresy?

In comments following the speech, former Bishop of Atlanta Bennett J. Sims blasted charges made by members of the Irenaeus Fellowship and the Episcopal Coalition on Religious Freedom that a report by the Presiding Bishop's Consultation on the Environment and Sustainable Development was "flawed by the pagan heresy of Gnosticism and a tone of environmental triumphalism." The charge stems from the acceptance of the concept of "panentheism," the belief that God is present in all creation, by the report. "Whether or not panentheism is heresy is a matter for debate, but I believe we must risk it," stated Sims.

"I really hate to disagree with Bennett Sims," replied William Wantland, bishop of Eau Claire, in a follow-up speech, "but panentheism is clearly contrary to the Christian concept of creation." Wantland, of Seminole ancestry, said his Native American roots inform his concern for the creation "to the seventh generation," but that the church in working to preserve the environment must do so from a clearly Christian perspective. Wantland's position was backed up by several speakers from the Episcopal Coalition for Religious Freedom, who criticized what they saw as "fuzzy theology and fuzzy thinking" in resolutions now before the convention. "I'm not sure of the value of an Episcopal EPA," commented the coalition's chair Lawrence Adams, referring to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Proposals costly

Several proposals for practical solutions to the church's approach to the environment were vigorously debated.

Proposals by the Standing Commission on Human Affairs to create a Standing Commission on the Environment and Sustainable Development, and establishing a funded staff position at the Episcopal Church Center, were seriously hampered by the costs anticipated to make them a reality. Both Scott Evans and Diane Pollard of the Episcopal Environmental Coalition argued for the creation of an alternative, a top-level Committee on the Environment costing \$75,000 to fund and made up of lay people and clergy involved in environmental work.

The convention finally adopted a team approach for education, advocacy, and action in the church on the environment: the creation of an Environmental Stewardship Team, a 14-member "interdisciplinary, multicultural" group selected by the presiding bishop and the president of the House of Deputies from each province of the church. Funded by a \$100,000 line item in the program budget, the team will report to the Executive Council during the next three years and to the General Convention in 1994.

House of Bishops environment committee secretary Robert G. Tharp, bishop coadjutor of East Tennessee, was surprised and pleased at the variety of the responses at the hearing. "We

heard a scope here (from) resources we haven't used, and we've got to find these people and use them. We have got to discover our own talent."

Resolutions on environmental issues which the convention approved include:

- Request promotion of the Valdez Principles addressing planetary environmental concerns (A-109a).
- Acknowledge the sovereignty of God and continue to engage environmental issues, passionately caring for the earth and striving to live as stewards of creation (A-195s).
- Call for the implementation of statement on the environment of the 1988 Lambeth Conference (D-041).
- Call on the Episcopal Church, at national, provincial, diocesan, and local levels to seek diligently and intentionally to reduce the use of paper in the conduct of its business, including by adopting as policy the practice of printing and photocopying on both sides of the paper it uses (D-087).
- Express support for the Endangered Species Act (D-124).
- Oppose the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska for oil development (D-125).

91152

International clashes are played out at hearings, debates

by Mike Barwell

The Episcopal Church's role as a critical voice on international affairs was tested during the 70th General Convention.

Not only were bishops and deputies in sharp disagreement on whether to commend or condemn the policy of President George Bush -- a prominent Episcopalian -- but they also got a frank rebuke from Jewish leaders for tinkering in the Israeli-Palestinian disputes.

Ultimately, resolutions praising Bush and the U.S. military for leadership during the Persian Gulf crisis -- characterized by one bishop as "among the most distressing to come to the floor of this house" -- were shot down with high-flying rhetoric.

Human rights dominate hearing

Strong criticism of human rights violations against Palestinians dominated a hearing on international issues in the early days of convention as speakers expressed outrage at what they called intolerable conditions in the occupied territories held by Israel.

Speakers at the hearing held by the cognate Committees on National and International

Problems also urged continued sanctions against South Africa, despite the easing of some apartheid laws, and called for the protection of human rights in Central America.

Many speakers testifying on the Middle East called for greater accountability for the substantial financial support of Israel by the United States government. "It seems anomalous that we're talking about sanctions against South Africa, and we don't ask a question about the \$3 billion that goes to Israel from our government every year," said Mel Matteson, a deputy from the Diocese of Olympia. Despite evidence of brutality against Palestinians, "nothing seems to move our administration to say 'enough is enough,'" he said.

Matteson and others criticized the building of houses by Israeli settlers in the occupied territories. As more houses go up, "day by day it becomes harder" to find a peaceful solution that permits Palestinian sovereignty, he said.

"We built those houses," Bishop C. Cabell Tennis of Delaware said bluntly. "The policy of the government of the United States built those houses." At the same time, he said, "I do not think there is another force in the world other than our policy" that can help bring about peace.

"For 40 years, Palestinians have suffered," said Patti Browning, wife of Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, who frequently visits the region on behalf of the church. "How long can they live while their land is being occupied by increasing numbers of settlers? It is urgent that the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis get under way."

Kafity grateful for support

The Most Rev. Samir Kafity, president-bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, a separate province of the Anglican Communion, said he was "grateful that the Christian Church has finally become vocal" in its concern about Palestinians. "We are a church, and a church that does not speak is no church."

Both sides must listen if there is to be change, Kafity said. "Israel must be humble to listen. So must the Palestinians who are not powerless. Peace requires change. They must change their minds." Security for Israel, he added, cannot be obtained "by militarism, but by having neighborly relations."

Israel's position was defended by Rabbi Robert L. Kravitz of the American Jewish Committee, and by David Peleg, minister of information from the Embassy of Israel in Washington, D.C. "You should not go on record as being anti-Israeli, which would be anti your tradition and mine," Kravitz said. Such actions, he said, "may, in fact, have the opposite effect" intended, by giving "the right wing an opportunity to become more defensive and more antagonistic against what you are looking for. Please open the door, don't slam it shut."

"The world will look for your deliberations to be fair, balanced, and not anti-Israel," Kravitz said. "The world is searching for peace. Peace is not easy to come by." Israel is

surrounded by 22 Arab nations that have declared war on it, he said. "Were it not for the battle of survival against Jordanians and other Arabs," he said, the territories would not now be Israeli territory.

After deputies and bishops agreed to support an international conference to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Kravitz returned to the bishops to deliver a stinging rebuke, and a promise to help "constructively intensify relationships between the Episcopal Church and the Jewish community."

"The American Jewish Committee expresses keen disappointment with the tone, the substance, and the timing of the major Middle East resolutions and their lack of fairness," said Kravitz. "We would have hoped for a positive and reconciling statement regarding Israel, especially after our tribulations in the recent Gulf War, including 39 unprovoked missile attacks against civilian targets."

"We respond to your resolutions sadly, with a heavy heart," Kravitz said. "They are unfair and unbalanced and will not be helpful in the peace process. We regret the imbalance that cites only Israel by name, which places demands only on Israel by name."

Harsh words about Bush

Perhaps the most interesting tug-of-war was fought over resolutions commending Bush and U.S. military leaders -- such as Gen. Colin Powell, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of State James Baker, also Episcopalians -- for their role in the Gulf War.

Deputies said yes, bishops said no.

In a close vote by division of the house, the bishops chose not to concur with a House of Deputies resolution (D-135a) condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, offering concern for the suffering of the Iraqi people, extending appreciation for the leadership of the president and military during the war, and commending efforts of relief agencies with war victims. The sticking point for the bishops centered on passages commending the president and military.

The vote came after the bishops approved by one vote an amendment to eliminate recognition of the president's "commitment to prayer, and his sensitivity to the needs of military personnel, their families, and the victims of warfare." The bishops' threadbare approval of the deletion -- 79 for and 78 against -- came after extensive debate in which several bishops questioned the wisdom of commending actions that resulted in tens of thousands of estimated casualties.

Bishop Sanford Hampton of Minnesota said he found the deputies' resolution to be "among the most distressing to come to the floor of this house." Hampton said that he and other bishops consider President Bush's actions in the Gulf to be "entirely inappropriate and inconsistent even for those who support the so-called just-war theories."

"What happened in the Gulf War," said Paul Moore, retired bishop of New York, "is one

of the deepest tragedies and deepest blots on our country." The president has the blame for "the 200,000 dead" from that conflict, Moore said. "To commend him is the very last thing this house should do," he said.

Bishop Mellick Belshaw of New Jersey said he believed that commending the president would be in direct opposition to the ministry of the presiding bishop, a reference to Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning's counsel to Bush last fall not to go to war with Iraq.

Commenting after the defeat of the resolution, Browning said he thought the debate would serve as a valuable resource in his future meetings with President Bush. "He has asked me to continue to be in dialogue," Browning said. "I have every intention of sharing with him what this debate was like and what we see happening in this house."

Latin dioceses speak out

In a separate session, Bishop José Saucedo of the Diocese of Cuernavaca in Southern Mexico said the Province IX bishops were frustrated over being "forgotten."

The Episcopal Church is comprised of 99 domestic dioceses grouped into eight geographical internal provinces. Province IX is a jurisdiction which includes dioceses in Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and northern South America which were at one time missionary dioceses of the church.

Surrounded at the podium by the bishops of the ninth province, Saucedo reminded the bishops that the ninth province churches are no longer the arenas for chaplaincy work but national churches in their own right. Yet, he said, in committee reports, only the U.S. church is given recognition. "We cannot be forgotten. We are here and are a real part of the Episcopal Church," Saucedo told the bishops.

South Africa not forgotten

Support for U.S. sanctions against South Africa -- and protest of President Bush's July 10 action to lift them -- was voiced by most speakers addressing apartheid, and in a statement from Archbishop Desmond Tutu read by Chaplain James Anderson of Maryland.

"Regarding sanctions, we expected the U.S. to lift them," Tutu observed. "We are amazed at the speed with which they have done so, contrasting with their reluctance to impose them. We are upset that it appears to have happened without consultation with our black political leadership, reminiscent of the old paternalism of the West.

"Fortunately, sanctions have been effective -- they forced South Africa out of Angola, and so Namibia is independent," the statement continued. "The speed with which the sanctions are being lifted as a reward for Mr. de Klerk is the most eloquent testimony to their success."

A member of Tutu's staff, Emma Mashinini, director of reconciliation and justice programs

for the Church in the Province of Southern Africa, told the committee that until quality education is available to all black children, and until land is restored to black ownership, apartheid is not ended, and sanctions are therefore in order.

By the end of convention, four resolutions about South Africa had been adopted.

Convention resolutions on international affairs include the following:

President Bush

- Commend the presiding bishop's response to the Gulf Crisis (A-164s).
- Extend greetings to President Bush and continue to offer prayers that he be led by the Holy Spirit in all decisions (D-074s).

Sale of Arms

- Call on the U.S. government to give full accounting of all military assistance and sale of military equipment to all nations in the Middle East (A-149s).
- Express deep concern over the actions of the U.S. that have contributed to the sale and spread of arms to nations throughout the world (D-187a).
- Deplore the reintroduction of weapons of all kinds into the Middle East by any nation (D-186).

Middle East

- Commend dioceses and congregations in their support for emergency relief to Middle East countries (D-201).
- Declare commitment to religious liberty in the Middle East (D-130a).
- Urge the presiding bishop to consult with the President-Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East to determine the most useful long-term support and encouragement which the Episcopal Church can provide (D-007).
- Adopt the statement from the Anglican Primates Meeting in April 1991 regarding peace and justice issues arising from the Gulf War (B-011a).
- Express solidarity with all Christians in the Middle East, especially the Diocese of Jerusalem and Bishop Samir Kafity; urge dioceses to study Christian-Muslim relations; encourage American Episcopalians to journey to Jerusalem (A-150s).
- Call upon Secretary General of the United Nations to call for unfreezing of assets of Palestinians and other refugees from the Gulf War (D-203).
- Recognize the distinction between legitimate criticism of the Israeli government and the impropriety of anti-Jewish prejudice (D-122).
- Support the efforts of the secretary of state to convene a conference to resolve the Palestinian/Israeli conflict (D-008s).
- Affirm the two-state solution for Israel and Palestinian refugees (A-147s).
- Commend the United States and allied troops who have effectively provided humanitarian relief and protection that allow the safe return of the Kurds to their traditional homeland in northern Iraq (D-200).
- Put pressure on the government of Kuwait to stop the secret trials and other punitive measures against Palestinians and Kuwaitis alleged to have collaborated in the Iraqi occupation (D-202).
- Request the President of the United States to lead the nation in an act of repentance for death, destruction, and displacement of persons in Iraq and nations of the Middle East (B-046a, a).

Latin America

- Acknowledge progress being made toward electoral process in El Salvador that will lead to effective expression of the political will of the people of that country (D-133a).
- Express solidarity with sugar cane workers and their families in light of the "neglect, anguish, and terror suffered by all those who live in the sugar plantations of the Dominican Republic" The resolution also demands that the Haitian and Dominican authorities work to guarantee the human rights of these people. (C-054a).
- Oppose use of Latin American countries as dumping places for waste, prohibited pesticide, and other chemical residue (B-044a).
- Support peace initiatives in Central America (A-160s).
- Call for improved diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba, lifting the trade embargo (D-021a/a).
- Call upon the government of Brazil to support structural changes in that country (D-144s).

South Africa

- Call on the United Nations to monitor the process bringing about negotiations to end apartheid and to establish a nonracial, democratic South Africa (A-155a).
- Reinstate comprehensive sanctions against South Africa until the Church of the Province of South Africa and the South African Council of Churches advise that the process for ending apartheid is irreversible (A-154s).
- Urge parishes and dioceses to express their love, concern and support to the Most Rev. Desmond Tutu of South Africa through study of the situation there, offering financial and other resources, and reaching out in intercessory prayer (A-158).
- Urge the United States government to press for a negotiated settlement that would bring an end to the present violence in South Africa caused by political and factional fighting (A-156).

Other international affairs

- Affirm support for religious freedom for Christians in the People Republic of China (D-127a).
- Ask Japan to uphold the rights of Koreans and other minorities in Japan (D-052s).
- Call for religious freedom and economic liberty in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (B-048).
- Commend the Japanese board and staff of Kiyosato Experimental Education Project (KEEP) (B-030).
- Commend the President of the United States for actions that suggest ending the understandable and long-held refusal to establish economic or diplomatic relations with Vietnam (D-143a).
- Urge dioceses to commend and support efforts for peace in the world through the work of the Episcopal Peace and Justice Network (A-161, A-163).
- Encourage Vietnam and the United States to continue in their dialogue toward full diplomatic relations (D-129a).
- Express solidarity with Chinese people who are demonstrating their convictions about democracy during this time of crisis (C-019a).
- Urge Episcopal Migration Ministries and the Presiding Bishop's Fund to give high priority to repatriation of Liberians to their homeland and resettlement programs for those unable to return home; urge Episcopalians to be constant in prayer and generous in giving for this crisis (D-142).

-- Contributing to this report were David Skidmore, James Thrall, Bob Williams, Steve Weston and Barbara Ogilby

91153

Volume of legislation overwhelms debate of domestic issues

by Mike Barweil

A host of domestic issues -- including abortion, medical ethics, domestic violence, economic justice, and aging -- struggled for attention and survival during General Convention. Many succeeded with little debate or fanfare, but several issues may have been lost in the avalanche of paperwork overwhelming the deputies and bishops in the final days.

Debates about abortion and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, for example, were time-consuming and passionate. Some policy resolutions were defeated in last-minute squabbles about amendments or ignored in the rush to decide more pressing concerns before adjournment.

With 580 resolutions facing committee scrutiny, lively discussions, amendments, adoptions, or concurrence, some issues may have fallen by the wayside and expired of neglect in the desert. A list of casualties may not be available for weeks.

Nuclear energy generates heat

The House of Bishops rejected a resolution that would have supported exploration of peaceful uses of nuclear power (D-118).

Offered as a way to "protect the environment, reduce dependence on foreign powers, and assure the quality of American life," the resolution called for the church to "support efforts to explore the peaceful uses of nuclear power through its progressive development as a source of electric power for the United States." Deputies had amended the resolution by urging attention to "a safe and responsible long-term disposal of nuclear waste within the United States."

Despite narrow approval by the deputies, several bishops argued against passing the resolution out of concern for the radioactive waste created by the nuclear industry. Until the industry can dispose of waste in a safe way, the church should not recommend its expansion, they said. The resolution was flawed by not mentioning alternative forms of energy, maintained Bishop Stewart Zabriskie of Nevada, a major site of nuclear testing and repository of nuclear waste in the U.S. Other energy sources, Zabriskie said, "will not create waste to throw in our beautiful desert."

"This will be seen as an endorsement by our church of nuclear power," said Bishop Steve Charleston of Alaska. "While I would be open-minded about talking about some of those ways in which nuclear energy might be explored," Charleston said he was unwilling to vote for a resolution that could be misconstrued.

The bishops rejected the resolution with a clear voice vote.

Abortion decision uncertain

Following debate about retaining or revising the church's statement on abortion, it was unclear whether a new consensus on abortion had emerged from this convention.

The original resolution submitted expressed "unequivocal opposition to any legislative, executive or judicial action on the part of local, state, or national governments that would abridge the right of a woman to reach the informed decision about termination of pregnancy and that would limit the access of a woman to safe means of acting on her decision." (C-021)

Bishops, apparently unwilling to issue so strong a statement, substituted the policy hammered out during major debates at the 1988 General Convention in Detroit. Deputies decided to frame their own substitute resolution affirming the rights of women to reach informed decisions about the termination of pregnancy but adding the 1988 statement as well. However, both houses approved a resolution opposing laws requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions.

Economic justice a sleeper

Economic justice -- the surprise domestic legislative package emerging from the Detroit convention -- seemed to be an almost-forgotten issue in Phoenix.

In Detroit, convention responded overwhelmingly to a plan offered by the Diocese of Michigan calling for creation of a \$24 million trust fund to enable the church to respond to the needs of the poor and minorities who are economically disadvantaged.

Overshadowed by the hotter issues, both houses concurred -- with little debate -- to establish an independent National Episcopal Housing Corporation to meet the growing need for affordable housing by accessing federal, foundation, and individual grants. The proposal is a direct outgrowth of the Detroit action.

The resolution directs the Executive Council to form a Housing Organizing Committee to prepare articles of incorporation that would permit the new organization financial and legal independence from the national church and its operating budget.

"An important function of this independent housing corporation would be to access new funding opportunities from federal and private sources," the resolution says. "Such a corporation would greatly increase, expand, and intensify the church's identification with the mission and ministry of housing while presenting no financial obligations to the church."

Other actions approved by convention include the following resolutions, which now become church policy:

Abortion

- Oppose laws requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions (C-037s).

Aging

- Request continuing education of clergy and support of aging and older adult ministries (C-057a).
- Support the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging (A-114).

Capital punishment

- Reaffirm the position taken in opposition to capital punishment by the 1958, 1969, and 1979 General Conventions (D-056).

Children

- Recognize the national crisis in the pauperization of women and children (D-067).
- Support increased funding for the federal Women, Infants, and Children program (C-027).
- Urge Nestle's/Carnation and Bristol-Myers to cease advertising infant formula products (D-057a).

Health and Medical

- Acknowledge a "Living Will" as a beneficial document for use before the onset of illness and death (C-008).
- Adopt guidelines in the area of genetic engineering (A-095).
- Decry the inequitable health care delivery system in the U.S. and call upon government leaders to devise a system of universal access for our country (A-099).
- Reaffirm recommendation that married couples considering external fertilization and embryo transfer seek the care and counsel of the church and of professional counselors (A-101a).
- Remind all church members they have a responsibility for the care of their bodies as the temple of God (A-098).
- Urge the church to give spiritual direction and care to those addicted to substance abuse and their families (A-100a).
- Call attention to the need for increased care of the mentally ill in the United States (D-088a).
- Continue the work of the Presiding Bishop's Task Force on Accessibility (D-084).
- Addressing addiction to alcohol and other drugs should be one of the program priorities for the next triennium (D-172a).
- Limit the acceptable uses of fetal tissues for therapeutic or medical research (A-096a).
- Mandate diocesan compliance with maternity/parental leave policy (D-111).
- Provide medical, dental, and life insurance benefits to all lay employees of the church (A-137s).
- Reaffirm its 1982 resolution to recognize and approve the "Living Will" as a beneficial document (C-008).
- Recommend that every diocese review the reports of the Standing Commission on Health (A-094).
- Set guidelines on foregoing life-sustaining treatment when such treatment "by extraordinary means" prolongs death (A-093a).
- Support the Americans with Disabilities Act (D-089a).
- Urge that state Medicaid offices make funds available to enable use of the Norplant implants by women who choose to use it (D-059).
- Urge members of the Episcopal Church to consider organ donation after death, so that others may live (A-097).

Economic Justice

- Urge dioceses to commend and support efforts for peace in the world through the work of the Episcopal Peace and Justice Network (A-161, A-163).
- Endorse federal policies shifting economic resources from military to civilian uses (A-146s).
- Call upon executive branch of the federal government and the U.S. Congress to designate community-based banks as "critical" to the health of the communities throughout the nation (D-023a).
- Calling on the church to exercise debt forgiveness, faithful stewardship, and human liberation as a means of celebrating Jubilee year 2000, with referral to Executive Council (D-070s).
- Express concern to the Department of Housing and Urban Development over deteriorating housing conditions facing low and moderate income residents of the U.S. (D-078).
- Reaffirm the importance of the program of Jubilee Ministry, reflected in its funding as an integral part of the church program (A-124).
- Reestablish the Economic Justice Implementation Committee (A-080a).
- Support the policy of equal pay for work of equal value, otherwise known as pay equity (D-066).

Peace

- Support selective conscientious objection as legitimate expression of individual conscience (D-054s).
- Encourage each congregation to support engagement of social, economic, and political issues (A-127s).
- Change the Standing Commission on Peace and Justice to "Peace *with* Justice (A-162).

Women

- Affirm and celebrate the ordination of women to the diaconate, the priesthood, and the episcopate (D-175s).
- Endorse the United Nations' "Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women," originally adopted in 1979 (A-091).
- Urge the church to support the Ecumenical Decade in Solidarity with Women, in cooperation with the World Council of Churches' venture in securing funding and participation by church leadership (A-057a).

Violence

- Encourage Episcopalians to choose entertainment options that don't exploit gratuitous violence (C-045s).
- Renew a commitment to address violence in every sector of society (C-022).

91154

\$43.5 million budget approved; national staff cuts imminent

by Jim Thrall and Steve Weston

Both houses of General Convention adopted the \$43,470,000 General Church Program Budget for 1992 with little debate. The General Convention Program Budget also was approved separately and contains a three-year appropriation of \$8,263,895. The general budget reflects a decrease both in diocesan contributions to the national budget and in funds available for national staff.

The vote was unanimous in both houses, except for the single abstention of Bishop Robert D. Rowley, Jr., of Northwestern Pennsylvania, who said that since his diocese would not be able to meet its full assessment this year or in 1992, he felt he should not vote on a budget he knew he could not completely financially support.

Deputies asked for clarification on the extent of 10 percent across-the-board spending reductions indicated by the budget. Harry W. Havemeyer, chair of the Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance, told deputies that such a budget "can only take effect if we at all levels take stewardship seriously." When parishes and missions respond to the standard of giving adopted by General Convention "time and time again," Havemeyer said, "the mission of our church we are planning today will be accomplished. But if we don't, and the flow of dollars does not come from the parishes and dioceses to the national church, all will suffer." He said the persons the farthest away from the visible church, "whom we have the hardest time seeing, will suffer the most."

Doing fewer things better

The major reductions required by the budget "obviously affect the Episcopal Church Center in a way that is going to take a great deal of planning and a great of strategizing," Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said following the vote in the House of Bishops.

Staff at the church center have been working since April "to look at how we might need to restructure in light of both the priorities and the resources that are going to be available," Browning said. It is clear, he added, that that will mean both "reducing staff" and "cutting out some programs that cannot be supported. We have to learn to do fewer things better."

While painful, the process is simply "sharing in the struggles that each diocese is struggling with in terms of financing your programs," Browning said. "The national church center has to be a part of that." At the same time, he said, "we're all the national church, and we all have deep accountability for the programs that you say are priorities that you ask me and the staff at the center to carry out."

The staff at the church center is "fully aware" of the upcoming cuts, Browning said, but there is still a "lot of anxiety about who's going to be there at the beginning of 1992." His central concern, he said, is "how do we take care of those who will indeed lose their positions at the center?"

Browning said he hopes planning for adjustments can be completed by October, in order to give the staff who do lose their jobs time as much time as possible to find new positions.

Not business as usual

The 1992 budget is not "a business as usual" proposal, said Bishop George Hunt of Rhode Island, chair of the committee's program section, but a fresh attempt to address the primary arena for mission: dioceses and congregations. "We will give the maximum support possible to those programs which most directly enhance and support the ministry delivery of our dioceses and congregations," said Hunt, "with special attention to minimizing any possible collateral damage to other current programs and agencies."

The new initiatives focus on evangelism and congregational development, racism, the environment, AIDS ministry education, creation of new Jubilee Ministry centers, Asiamerican youth ministry development, and new ministry assistance for the Episcopal Council on Indian Ministries.

While most programs experienced cuts of 5 to 10 percent, a number of Advocacy, Witness, and Justice Ministries programs were given slight increases or maintained at 1991 funding levels. One in particular, Native American Ministries, had a quantum leap: bounding from \$219,603 to \$1,240,722. This was not actually an increase, said Hunt, but a transfer to the ECIM account of Coalition-14 funds that were intended for Native American ministry.

Founded in 1970 as a coalition of 14 western dioceses, Coalition-14 now includes 16 dioceses and serves to channel funds to missions in rural areas. In recent years it has included major new work with Native Americans.

General Convention budget \$8.2 million

Bishop Don Wimberly of Lexington, Kentucky, chair of the assessment section of the committee, said the \$8,263,895 General Convention expense budget for the next triennium was developed with a careful eye to adhering to prudent stewardship and management guidelines. "In the spirit of those guidelines," said Wimberly, "all meeting and travel expense in this budget is estimated on the assumption that meetings will occur over weekends and/or in conference centers."

The convention expense budget is meant to cover the costs of General Convention committees meeting between conventions and those of the offices of the presiding bishop and the president of the House of Deputies. The assessment section of the committee is proposing a

diocesan assessment for General Convention, he said, of .027 percent to cover the projected increased cost of \$450,000 for the 1994 convention in Indianapolis.

In other budgetary and stewardship matters, the convention passed the following resolutions:

- Adopt a definition of stewardship as it relates to a theology of mission (A-185a).
- Adopt a new charge for the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development (A-184a).
- Remind clergy to educate their congregations on the necessary execution of wills and provision when possible of bequests for religious and charitable uses (A-186a).
- Reaffirm "50/50 giving," a policy adopted at the 69th General Convention which mandates that dioceses and parishes spend at least as much on others as on themselves (A-188).
- Reaffirm resolution D-165 of the last General Convention, urging each Episcopalian household to tithe 10 percent of its income to the church (A-189).
- Affirm the value of the Every Member Canvass in the development of stewardship in the church (A-190).
- Ask that clergy instruct their congregations in the requirements of Christian stewardship (A-192).
- Commend seminaries for stewardship education (A-197).
- Request Executive Council to develop a coordinated program of extrabudgetary giving to further enable the mission of the church (A-200).
- Review restrictions and conditions under which endowment funds are received (A-202).
- Urge all dioceses and congregations to review the restrictions, conditions, and purposes under which their endowed gifts were received (A-202).
- Commend the Diocese of Western Massachusetts for its development and use of a consolidated cash management system (A-204).
- Commend the narrative budget as described in the current series, "The Star System for Stewardship" (A-203).
- Reevaluate the Church Pension Fund to include survivor benefit options for single lay and clerical employees (D-015s).
- Accept Church Pension Fund report, "Freeing Our Ministers to Minister" (D-185).

91155

Browning, Executive Council proclaim new commitment to reach and change lives

by Steve Weston

In a multimedia presentation combining personal stories and new ministry initiatives, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning and the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church demonstrated to both houses of the General Convention what it takes to reach and change the lives of ordinary people.

The special joint session ended with an impassioned appeal by Browning for a fresh commitment to social justice and personal integrity, and the bishops and deputies attending the 70th General Convention responded with a standing ovation.

Eleven speakers addressed the convention, describing how the program priorities of the national church have affected local ministries since the 1988 General Convention in Detroit. The live presentations, projected onto two large overhead screens in the cavernous exhibition hall in the Phoenix Civic Plaza, were punctuated with short video retrospectives.

Presentations on council initiatives covered planning and development, stewardship training, creation of the church's monthly tabloid newspaper *Episcopal Life*, the Decade of Evangelism, economic justice programs assisted by revolving loan funds, the new Martin Luther King, Jr., Legacy Fund, support from the Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, environmental and social justice concerns, and the creation of the Episcopal Council of Indian Ministries.

Collins saluted

In his remarks to the joint meeting, Browning saluted the Very Rev. David Collins, president of the House of Deputies, who also serves as vice chair of the Executive Council. "We owe both him and the other members of the Executive Council a tremendous debt of gratitude," Browning said.

The presiding bishop then stirred the meeting by sharing what he termed "a few of the lessons I have learned among you." Marking the six-year, halfway point in his primacy, Browning said, "We rejoice that our church is a mosaic made up of a rich variety of gifts. Diversity is a quality we treasure. Sometimes we are self-consciously and even defiantly different. Yet, by faith, we, the many and varied and different, can proclaim with the apostle Paul that in Christ we are one."

In a reference to the tension surrounding issues facing the convention, Browning said,

"Arguments about sin and sinner, about orthodox and heretic, about who is and who is not to be ordained, crop up with regularity." Because the church is more than the sum of its parts, "it has a gospel to proclaim, a mission to carry out." The world will pay little attention to the church's housekeeping details, he said, because it "writhes in its own pain and brokenness. Woe be to us if we are not clear about our mission."

Witness to public and private life

The presiding bishop's insistence that the witness of the church affects both public and private life met with strong approval from the joint session. He expressed disappointment with President Bush's abandonment of sanctions against South Africa, and insisted that the convention "send the clear message that we are not abandoning our partners." Both remarks were followed by sustained applause.

Browning also insisted that the church continue to witness for world peace by refusing to sacrifice justice for expediency. "Let us dream of a church that speaks out boldly and with authority on the place of military spending and armaments in our national life." Browning recalled the opposition of U.S. church leaders to the Persian Gulf war, and suggested that Christians must be a moral conscience in the face of war, even if they find themselves in opposition to government policy. He urged participation in a continuing national debate to "redirect the foreign policy goals of our government and our commerce to ends more worthy of the great nation we are."

In addition to operating thousands of soup kitchens which feed the hungry every day, Browning said, "we actively advocate on behalf of the poor and the homeless, the economically and racially oppressed, and those afflicted by AIDS and countless other social ills. We not only reach into the river of despair and rescue people who are drowning, we also move upstream to see who is throwing them in. And it makes a difference."

Urging the church to dream boldly, Browning returned to the theme which has become his trademark. "Six years ago I called for a more inclusive and more compassionate church. I declared there would be no outcasts in this church. In the years that have ensued, I have been amazed at the number among us who consider themselves to be outcasts. I have been amazed at the fear that creates outcasts -- a fear of difference and diversity, a fear that obscures the faces of our brothers and sisters and makes them seem the faces of strangers."

Browning called for an even more compassionate church, "where none need feel themselves excluded from full participation for fear of being different."

91156

Chinnis elected first woman president of deputies; Frey is vice president; other elections posted

With three standing ovations and by acclamation, the House of Deputies of the 70th General Convention elected Pamela Chinnis of Washington, D.C., to be the first woman ever to sit as its president.

Chinnis thanked the deputies' current president, the Very Rev. David Collins, and the deputies "for being willing to take a chance on me." She expressed hope that the deputies "can make a difference in the church and in the world."

Three times the House of Deputies rose to its feet in applause, first when Judge Charles Crump of West Tennessee suggested Chinnis be elected by acclamation, when Chinnis was escorted forward, and finally when she ended her short acceptance speech.

Chinnis, a native of Missouri, is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the College of William and Mary. Majoring in psychology, she did research for the Air Force and later returned the college as an instructor in psychology. She also has served a term on Executive Council and was presiding officer of Episcopal Church Women. She has been a delegate to the Anglican Consultative Council, an advisory council comprised of the 29 international Anglican provinces, and a member of the governing board and executive committee of the National Council of Churches.

Chinnis was the first woman to be elected senior warden of the Church of the Epiphany in Washington.

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, commenting in a written statement, said, "I'm absolutely delighted at the election of Pam Chinnis. She has a deep understanding of this church, and of the life and workings of the house she has been elected to lead. Pam has already brought significant leadership to our church, to the Anglican Communion, and to our ecumenical partners," Browning said.

The Rev. Wallace A. Frey of Central New York and rector of St. David's Church in DeWitt, N.Y., was elected vice president of the House of Deputies. "I will simply try my very best to serve this house, this church, and the one we name as Lord," Frey told deputies upon his election on the fourth ballot in a voting process that began Wednesday. Frey, 55, succeeds Chinnis as vice president.

Frey has been a deputy to General Convention since 1970, and served this convention and the one previous as chair of the House of Deputies Committee on Ministry -- a body that grappled with issues of sexuality and the ordination process.

In other national church roles, Frey has served as a member of Executive Council and as vice chair of the Standing Commission on World Mission, as a trustee of the Episcopal Divinity

School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and as a mentor of the Education for Ministry program of the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. He also has chaired the national Board for Theological Education and was active in developing the churchwide policy that each congregation give 1 percent of its net disposable budget income to the seminary of its choice.

Also elected by the deputies were the Rev. Canon Donald Nickerson as secretary of General Convention for the next triennium, and Ellen F. Cooke as treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society PECUSA (the corporate name of the Episcopal Church).

Other elections

The following persons were also elected during General Convention:

- **General Board of Examining Chaplains:** Bishop James B. Brown of Louisiana, and Bishop Robert Ladehoff of Oregon; The Rev. Robert William Duncan of Delaware, the Rev. Wallace A. Frey of Central New York, and the Rev. Ann Wilson Robbins of Southern Ohio; The Very Rev. Guy F. Lytle, dean of St. Luke's Theological Seminary, Sewanee, Tennessee; the Very Rev. William H. Peterson, dean of Bexley Hall, Rochester, N.Y.; and the Rev. Ellen K. Wondra, professor, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, N.Y.; Pamela W. Darling, of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; Warren C. Ramshaw of Central New York; and John C. Wolf of Northwest Texas.

- **Trustees of the Church Pension Fund:** Bishop William A. Beckham of Upper South Carolina, Bishop Herbert Thompson, Jr., of Southern Ohio, and Bishop Orris G. Walker, Jr., of Long Island; the Rev. Donald E. Bitsberger of Virginia, the Rev. Canon James R. Gundrum of South Dakota, and the Rev. Noreen Suriner Craley of Maryland; Vincent Currie, Jr., of Central Gulf Coast, Robert M. Gordon of Utah, the Hon. Joseph E. Michael, Jr., of New Hampshire, Clay Myers of Oregon, Samuel F. Pryor III of New York, and Prezell R. Robinson of North Carolina.

- **Board of Trustees of General Theological Seminary:** Bishop Mellick Belshaw of New Jersey, and Bishop Andrew F. Wissemann of Western Massachusetts.

- **Executive Council:** (elected by the House of Bishops) Bishop Calvin Schofield, Jr., of Southeast Florida and Bishop Sam Hulsey of Northwest Texas; (elected by the House of Deputies) the Rev. J. Earl Cavanaugh of West Missouri; the Rev. Benjamin Pao of Los Angeles; and the Rev. Fran Toy of California; Margaret Anderson of Arizona; Joyce Phillips Austin of New

York; Sally Bucklee of Washington, D.C.; John McCann of Lexington, Kentucky; George Shields of Spokane, Washington; and Timothy Wittlinger of Michigan.

- **Nominating Committee for a Presiding Bishop** (one cleric, one layperson per province): Canon Roger Smith of Maine and Albert Mollegen of Connecticut (I); the Rev. Thomas Pike of New York and Diane Pollard of New York (II); the Rev. John Guernsey of Virginia and Iris Harris of Washington, D.C. (III); the Very Rev. Henry Louttit of Georgia and Charles Crump of West Tennessee (IV); the Rev. Virginia Hunt of Chicago and John Cannon of Michigan (V); the Rev. Philip Allen of Minnesota and Judy Amber of Nebraska (VI); the Rev. Rayford High of Texas and Glennes Clifford of Oklahoma (VII); the Rev. Warner Traynham of Los Angeles and Bettye Jo Harris of Hawaii (VIII); the Rev. Lloyd Allen of Honduras and José Ramero Chavez of El Salvador (IX).

- **Episcopal Church Women:** Ginger Paul of West Louisiana, president; Mary Leigh Armstrong of Virginia, vice president for program; Helen Young of California, vice president for information; Sybil Fickle of Georgia, treasurer; and Emily Wilson of Connecticut, secretary.

- **National Altar Guild Association:** Barbara Wilson of Texas, president, Ruth Sickel of Southern Ohio, first vice president; Sally Boom of Central Gulf Coast, Florida, second vice president; Barbara Dewey of Washington, secretary; Eileen Hartin of Arizona, treasurer; and Nancy Grandfield of California, nominating chair.

91157

Church will continue to study inclusive-language texts

by Jeffrey Penn

"Human language will always fall short of describing the mystery of God," according to a supporter of the General Convention decision to continue the study of Supplemental Liturgical Materials, the so-called "inclusive-language" texts.

After a three-year experimental period, a lengthy Blue Book report, a large open hearing during the convention -- and the hint that the debate about whether to continue perfecting the texts

might be contentious -- the convention gave the process a three-year lease on life.

The project to develop liturgical texts that use gender-inclusive language began with a mandate from the 1988 General Convention to the Standing Liturgical Commission. Soon after the first drafts of the texts were written, the project went through several stages to perfect the texts. In the latest stage, an estimated 10,000 people from 400 parishes in the Episcopal Church submitted comments that were incorporated into the version presented to the convention.

The texts are not a replacement for the Book of Common Prayer, but are rather a collection of resources, according to Bishop Robert Ladehoff of Oregon, chair of the Standing Liturgical Commission. "They can therefore be used selectively. Some will find no use for it at all."

Texts receive a mixed review

Several speakers at an open hearing said that they had little use for the proposed texts. According to the Very Rev. John Rodgers of Pittsburgh, the texts are exclusive of "many of us who find them linguistically awkward. . . at best, and theologically erroneous at worst."

The Rev. Ruth Urban of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, suggested that the texts were confusing to the people who use them. "I am not opposed to inclusive language on a human level," she said. "However, having God as a father doesn't make me less feminine. Our God is not a God of confusion -- he is a God of clarity."

However, most of the testimony at the open hearing supported the continued study of the texts. The Rev. Louis Weil, another member of the commission, said his first reaction to the mandate given the commission was "clear opposition."

"I sit here as a convert," he said. "I have changed my mind on this issue." Weil said he was concerned that "extending our prayer forms in uncharted waters" might impair the unity that church liturgy should uphold. "I became convinced of the importance of this project" as it presented part of an ongoing process of expressing "the rich diversity of the body of Christ which I think is increasingly evident to us," he said.

The Rev. Canon Lloyd S. Casson of New York, a member of the commission, said the goal of the texts was to provide broader forms of worship in which "each of us -- male, female, of any race, any background, any orientation, any age -- knows him or herself to be in the mind of God."

"Some people will say that the texts are inadequate," said Bishop William Burrill of Rochester. "All texts are inadequate. That is why the project of developing liturgical language must be ongoing," he added.

The texts also are far from an attempt to neuter the language of liturgy, as some have suggested, Burrill said. "I would suggest that it is exactly the opposite. It is to enrich the language of liturgy."

Ladehoff said the texts adopted for study three years ago at the last General Convention "have enriched the lives of many Episcopalians."

Texts evaluated, improved

In a presentation to the House of Bishops following the open hearing, Ladehoff reviewed the development of the texts throughout the past three years. He reported that the Standing Liturgical Commission had been engaged in a "careful, responsive" process of evaluating and improving the texts.

"The comments they received and the suggestions were taken very seriously" in revisions of the texts, Ladehoff said. "There is still work to be done on these texts, and the Standing Liturgical Commission would be the first to tell us that." The only way to continue work on these texts "is through use" by congregations, which is what the resolution authorizes for the next three years, Ladehoff said. "We want to encourage this."

The two items omitted from general use have been the focus of many comments during the revision process so far, Ladehoff said. In the Doxology (paragraph 4), "'Honor and glory to God, and to the Eternal Word, and to the Holy Spirit,'" he said, "simply is not the same as 'Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.'" Eucharistic Prayer 3 (paragraph 34), which focuses on the "wisdom of God," has "too many theological problems for it to be used throughout the church at this time," Ladehoff said.

With relatively little debate the House of Bishops referred the two sections back to the Standing Liturgical Commission for further study and approved the rest of the materials for continued study during the next triennium. By a wide margin the House of Deputies concurred with the bishops' decision.

These resolutions were among those ratified by the convention regarding liturgical matters:

- Authorize trial use of new commemorations in the church calendar, with referral to the Executive Council (A-119s, A-120s).
- Acknowledge efforts in the development of a Mexican Hymnal (D-145a).
- Commend for study and evaluation the *Common Baptismal Liturgy* of the Consultation on Common Texts (A-115a).
- Continue to study, develop, and evaluate supplemental inclusive language texts (A-121a).
- Direct the Standing Commission on Church Music to prepare a series of supplements to the Hymnal 1982 (A-139a).
- Direct the Standing Liturgical Commission to work with appropriate resource persons to provide culturally sensitive liturgical texts for use in special situations and/or culturally significant events (D-184).
- Reaffirm an insistence upon baptism with water in the Triune Name of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (B-033a).
- Recognize the hymnal supplement "Come and Celebrate" (D-117a).
- Support the use of diverse musical styles in public worship (A-140a).

- Create propers for the use on the occasion of retirement, either of lay or clergy (A-122s).
- Request the Standing Liturgical Commission to prepare a paper to examine the lectionary so that it may be balanced both by historical concerns and the concerns of all categories of people (A-088s).
- Study the daily eucharistic lectionary from the Church of England and the Anglican Church of Canada (C-025s).

-- ENS General Convention staff contributed to this report.

91158

Sharp exchanges, executive sessions, and attempted censure force bishops to reexamine their role

by James Solheim and Jeffrey Penn

The bishops of the Episcopal Church confronted an unanticipated problem at the 70th General Convention -- an identity crisis of such magnitude that the bishops nearly ground to a halt while they attempted to settle old disputes and repair their tender "collegiality" long enough to do business together.

"This church was in a crisis in the first days of convention," admitted Bishop Christopher Epting of Iowa.

It was a drama played out daily as the bishops wrestled with the major issue facing convention -- sexuality and the ordination of homosexuals -- and with strong convictions on all sides of the issue. In a series of closed executive sessions, the bishops said they talked about their lives as bishops, the pressures they face, and the decisions they must make in an attempt to keep the church together. As a result, they agreed to meet in a retreat and re-examine their role as bishops.

"Being a bishop is one hell of a job," admitted Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning during a press conference. Browning said that there are 41 new bishops since the last General Convention and 74 since he was elected presiding bishop.

Some early sparks in a routine debate prompted the smoldering crisis to leap into flames. Bishop John Spong of Newark and Bishop John MacNaughton of West Texas traded sharp words over a resolution calling for inclusion of lesbians and gays on a church commission. The exchange prompted Bishop Arthur Walmsley to call on the presiding bishop to set a time "to discuss how to

do our business together." Walmsley characterized the exchange as "a foretaste of the shootout at the OK Corral."

Bishop Frank Allan of Atlanta and chair of the House of Bishops Committee on Ministry, said his committee proposed that the bishops meet in executive session because "I think we are facing a crisis of leadership and trust, and also in the way that we do business with one another as bishops." Allan also sent an unusual request to the House of Deputies to pray for the bishops. Several long-time deputies said it was the first time they could remember the House of Bishops sending a message specifically requesting prayers as the bishops opened deliberations.

Before it was even clear that the executive session was building a new level of trust, Bishop John Spong of Newark informed the house that his remarks in the closed session had been leaked to an officer of Episcopalians United, a group that has vigorously opposed Spong on his ordination of a gay to the priesthood.

Spong announced that a "top official" of Episcopalians United had "told me the contents of my remarks in the executive session. I think you need to know that the confidentiality of this house has been violated, and the trust of this house has been diminished." The news came as a stunning blow to the members. Said one bishop later, who declined to be identified, "There is not a bishop in that house that wasn't shocked by that news." He added that he felt the "credibility of the House of Bishops is on the line."

In an attempt to rebuild that credibility, the house voted to continue executive sessions every morning during the convention.

Browning describes 'special circumstances'

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, during a press conference with the Religious Newswriters Association, said he was uncomfortable with continuing the executive sessions for any purpose other than "special circumstances."

"We are trying to clear some of the anger, some of the confusion, some of the frustration that we have had with one another over the past couple of years," Browning said. "Feelings [were] brought to Washington, D.C, and not resolved," he added. During the last House of Bishops meeting in Washington last September, the bishops narrowly voted to "disassociate" themselves from Spong's ordination of a noncelibate homosexual in December 1989.

Browning admitted there is "a considerable amount of frustration about the legislative process" the convention uses to decide church policy. "During the next three years there will be a great deal of discussion about how we meet and deal with issues."

To overcome some of the bishops' frustrations, Browning scheduled a special, closed House of Bishops meeting in March to discuss confidential matters of the relationships among

bishops. The bishops will "meet just by ourselves" in a retreat setting, Browning said. "We need that kind of time."

Pastoral letter on role of bishops

In the midst of their deliberations on a staggering array of topics the bishops paused to focus on their own identity and role in church and society. The bishops reviewed a draft version of a proposed pastoral letter which will deal with the ministry of bishops. The draft document received extensive debate on the terminology used to describe the pastoral role of bishops.

Bishop George Bates of Utah said the bishops should be cautious in assuming the title of "chief executive officer," as proposed in the letter. "It seems that's an unfortunate image of what we're about." Another bishop noted that he used the title "chief operating officer" as a way of sidestepping the concern over being seen as a corporate officer as opposed to a pastor.

Diocesan bishops are traditionally given primary responsibility to preach, teach, confirm, and ordain. But many also are burdened with exercising authority over clergy deployment and other personnel matters, ordinations, and stewardship issues as well as being responsible for the fiscal health of the diocese, institutions, and parishes.

After discussion of whether pastoral letters are authoritative or merely instructional, the house approved a motion from Bishop C.I. Jones of Montana to have the proposed letter accepted as a working paper to be studied at the next regular interim House of Bishops meeting, scheduled for Baltimore in September 1992.

Motion to censure two bishops fails

In the closing days of the convention the fragile peace hammered out in the executive sessions was threatened by the introduction of a motion to censure two members of the house -- Bishop Ronald Haines of Washington (D.C.) and Bishop Walter Righter, former assisting bishop of Newark, who recently ordained noncelibate homosexuals.

Retired Bishop Gerald McAllister of Oklahoma, who introduced the censure motion, said "The real issue is an issue of the economy of God, an ordering of the household of faith. It is an issue of whether we shall have a government of law or whether it is everyone for him or herself.

"Silence at this point is consent," he said. The bishops' lack of action would encourage people "who by individualism and little thought of community are destroying the fabric of our community life." In asking for a vote on his resolution, McAllister said, "I plead with you to send me home in defeat," rather than "in shame that this house will not exercise its governance function."

In the ensuing discussions, bishops disagreed sharply over the issues at stake. The debate set concern for discipline in the house over against recognition of acts of individual conscience.

Bishop C. Cabell Tennis of Delaware said that the issue was one of boundary lines and accountability. "If there are no boundaries, there is no offense," he said. "And if there is no offense, it is totally unjust to censure anyone."

Bishop David Reed of Kentucky said he and other bishops felt "offended and betrayed" by the recent ordinations. Reed said there "must be some way one can express pain, anguish, disappointment and offense." While admitting that censure is a strong response, he said he felt it was appropriate.

In the course of the discussion, Bishops Edward Jones of Indianapolis and Stewart Wood of Michigan both rose to say that if the censure was passed, their names should be added to those of Haines and Righter because they also had engaged in such ordinations or similar actions. "There are a number of us in the house who could have been named were it a different time," Wood said, agreeing that the boundaries are unclear in the area of ordination.

The McAllister resolution was rejected in a clear voice vote. After rejecting a number of amendments to a substitute proposed by the Committee on Miscellaneous Resolutions, the bishops accepted the substitute by voice vote with a minor change.

A dilemma of conscience

The substitute resolution stated that the bishops recognize "the pain and damage to the collegiality and credibility of this house and to parts of the whole church when individual bishops and dioceses ordain sexually active gay and lesbian persons in the face of repeated statements of this House of Bishops and the General Convention against such ordinations."

It went on to "acknowledge the dilemma of conscience faced by each member of this House of Bishops resulting from these ordinations and from the fact that there is no clear consensus in this House of Bishops."

In order to "advance the honesty and collegiality of this House of Bishops," the resolution stated that "this deep concern over the gap between between what we profess and what we do be referred to the Presiding Bishop and Council of Advice for consideration of this matter by the House of Bishops at an interim meeting of the House."

In a press conference after the vote, Haines said he was pleased with the decision of the house. "Obviously no one likes to be censured," Haines said. "I do respect Bishop McAllister and his integrity and those who would have wished to go in that direction."

Haines said the focus of the substitute resolution on working out ways to deal with differences means that "we the bishops will struggle together in a new way theologically or biblically. What we're all saying is that we've got to revisit the scriptures and our own theology."

Can bishops trust each other on 'Episcopal Visitors?'

Although the 1988 General Convention approved the so-called "Episcopal Visitors" resolution, to protect congregations who disagree with diocesan bishops on the question of women's ordination, the bishops continued to test each other about whether the resolution is working and whether they should trust one another when they differ.

The bishops considered a resolution that would have expanded the intent of the 1988 resolution. The original "visitors" concept allows congregations which feel disenfranchised by the position of their male diocesan bishop -- whether he is for or against women's ordination -- to request a visiting bishop who agrees with their position on the issue of women's ordination to perform episcopal functions.

"We need a mechanism to enable the spirit of Philadelphia to be put into effect," said Bishop Donald Parsons, retired bishop of Quincy, referring to the understanding reached by bishops over the "visitors" resolution during their Philadelphia meeting in September 1989. That meeting was seen as a bench mark of attempted reconciliation between traditionalist and liberal bishops.

"If there is a mechanism that can enable this kind of thing to happen," said Parsons, "then we may be able to cut away some of the present atmosphere in some quarters, an atmosphere of fear, and suspicion, and rumor, and yes -- sometimes I must admit -- even paranoia."

A 'pastoral thrust'

"The idea is not to circumvent a diocesan's authority. It's a pastoral thrust," said Bishop Clarence Pope, Jr., of Fort Worth, the president and founder of the traditionalist Episcopal Synod of America. Pope alluded to the visitors plan having worked effectively in the past. "I say that I have, by the graciousness of Massachusetts, confirmed in his diocese," Pope said of Bishop David Johnson. "I was representing him. I was there on his invitation and on his authority," Pope said. Technically, Massachusetts is the only diocese that has implemented the plan since it was adopted in 1988.

In spite of the energy put forth by the bishops, on the last day the House of Deputies rejected, in a close vote by orders, the idea that a mechanism was needed to protect the 1988 "Episcopal Visitors" resolution.

Retired bishops retain vote in House

Another aspect of the issue of collegiality and leadership was the role of retired bishops: Should they retain the right to vote?

A constitutional change that would have denied retired bishops a vote in the House of Bishops was defeated. The resolution, first approved at the 1988 General Convention, was

presented for the second vote required for changes to the constitution. It would have removed the vote from those bishops not directly involved in oversight of dioceses.

Bishop Roger White of Milwaukee argued that, while he strongly favored "retired bishops sharing their wisdom with us," he opposed a situation in which "retired bishops and other bishops can outvote bishops who have to carry out the policies of this church in their dioceses and take the responsibility."

Retired Bishop Reginald H. Gooden of Panama argued against White's emphasis on the importance of jurisdiction. "What is the essence of the episcopate? What made us bishops?" he asked. "The essence of the episcopate is not jurisdiction. If that were so, and we were consistent, not only retired bishops, but also suffragans and assistant bishops would be disenfranchised."

Bishop Robert H. Cochrane of the Diocese of Olympia pointed out that one of the questions asked at his consecration was, "Will you share with your fellow bishops in the government of the whole church?" Cochrane said, "I believed then and I believe now that that promise was good for life. How can I share in the government of the church if I'm not allowed the power of the vote?"

Easier to bring bishops to trial

The House of Bishops decided, and the House of Deputies concurred, that in the future it will take one-quarter of the active bishops -- in the current house, nearly 75 bishops rather than nearly 200 -- to initiate the ecclesiastical trial of a bishop accused of teaching doctrine contrary to that held by the Episcopal Church.

According to the current canons, once a "presentment" -- or accusation that a bishop is teaching false doctrine -- is brought by 10 bishops, a vote of two-thirds of the nearly 300 active bishops is needed for the process to proceed to a trial.

The convention approved other legislation on the role of bishops:

- Revise Title III canons on the episcopate (A-131).
- Refer to the appropriate form of biographical information for bishops-elect in Title III canons (A-216a).
- Amend Article II of the Constitution by adding a new section on nominations from the floor in episcopal elections (B-017a).

91159
How church chooses clergy -- and evaluates their fitness for ministry -- surfaces as major issue

by Steve Weston

A report by the Church Deployment Board lays down the clearest challenge yet to how the church chooses its clergy and determines their fitness for ministry.

The subject of clergy deployment is an issue which has far-reaching implications for every parish and diocese in the church. But it was not the only clergy-related issue considered by the bishops and deputies during the 70th General Convention meeting in Phoenix July 10-20. Also approved were resolutions dealing with the role of deacons, access to ordination for all members, direct access to ordination, and clergy ethical behavior.

Call for new profile system

Largely overshadowed by the debates on sexuality, the deployment board's critical review of the clergy deployment system involved bishops, clergy, lay professionals, parish search committees, and ethnic minorities in 13 dioceses. Conclusions from 1,370 participants produced a series of recommendations that could radically alter the way the church deploys its professional ministers.

The report calls for the Board for Church Deployment to revise the clergy personal profile developed by the Church Deployment Office, a tool used in the search for new priests, declaring it "too complicated and too subjective" and a failure at presenting an accurate reflection of clergy leadership abilities and spirituality.

While 90 percent of the 15,000 clergy in the Episcopal Church are registered with the deployment office, only half keep their placement information current. The report urges bishops to insist their clergy maintain their profile information. The profiles are usually the chief tool of parish search committees in their task of finding a new rector.

Training for search committees and accountability for diocesan deployment officers factored into the report's conclusions. Search processes take too long to find new rectors for parishes, the report says, and a time frame of nine months or less should be considered adequate for the search process. "It is not healthy for any organization to be without consistent, permanent leadership for an extended period of time," according to the report. Search committees often feel hampered because of "poor or nonexistent training," the report says.

Deployment officers and consultants also are held up for scrutiny. The report asks the Deployment Board to begin a standardized program of study for deployment officers

encompassing ethical standards, decision-making, study of addictive behaviors, and legal aspects of personnel administration.

Clergy and laity interviewed for the report expressed concern over misuse of sensitive information available to deployment officers. In turn, the officers themselves said there is "no clear, consistent, universal set of ethical standards by which they can monitor their work." The report urges the framing of a universal code of ethical conduct by the Deployment Board with confidentiality as its centerpiece.

Bishops defeat equal access canon

An attempt to guarantee an open access to the ordination process faltered when deputies and bishops tethered it to the issue of the ordination of noncelibate homosexuals.

While bishops and deputies eventually reached a compromise on the main sexuality resolution -- affirming traditional marriage as the teaching of the church, admitting there is "discontinuity" between teaching and practice, and confessing an inability to reach a firm decision now -- access of homosexuals to the ordination process haunted the debates.

Bishops discharged a resolution (C-032) as part of the compromise, but the deputies resurrected and approved the measure, which would have guaranteed that "all members shall have equal access to the selection process for ordination in this church," without naming specific conditions, such as sexual preference, age, or disability.

Bishop Alex Dickson, Jr., of West Tennessee warned it could be used by some bishops as an excuse for going ahead with ordaining gays and lesbians. "I have every reason to believe that members of this house will interpret this canon in such a way as to justify the decision they have already made to ordain sexually active homosexual persons," Dickson concluded.

Bishop Thomas Ray of Northern Michigan argued that the equal-access measure addresses more than opening the ordination process to gays and lesbians. "I've discussed this with people who say this issue is much broader than that," Ray said. "It involves those who are discriminated against because of age, because of physical disabilities, and because of our myopia around the issue of sexuality."

A separate resolution adopted by both houses amends Canon I.17.5 that currently declares that no one is to be denied "rights or status in this church because of race, color, or ethnic origin." Using a much broader brush, the resolution eliminates reference to race or ethnicity by reversing the thrust from a negative list to a positive statement, saying, "All members shall have equal access to the life, worship, and governance" of the church.

Broader look at ministry

Who are the ministers to the church? What is their ministry?

These questions from the Book of Common Prayer catechism underscored a lengthy debate in the House of Bishops over the authority of the diaconate. The issue at hand was a recommendation from the bishops' Committee on Ministry to change the canon describing the duties of deacons.

Introduced by Bishop Frank Allan of Atlanta, the measure proposed loosening strictures that bar deacons from serving in chaplaincy ministries. While retaining the prohibition against perpetual deacons having charge of congregations or becoming chaplains in the Armed Forces, the bishops called for deacons to be able to serve as chaplains in Veterans Administration hospitals, prisons, and similar institutions.

Argument centered around the nature of servanthood, as the diaconate is often characterized, and whether that understanding precludes deacons from being pastors. Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Forces Charles Keyser said deacons are well suited to serve in vicarships, and logic dictates that the church enable them to do so. The problem is that the church is dealing "with the old hierarchy which doesn't fit anymore," said Keyser. "I would really urge we find some wording that does not strip deacons from being in charge."

It is important to ensure the diaconate gets full recognition as a separate order, said retired Bishop William Cox of Oklahoma, but care must be taken not to consider priests and deacons interchangeable. "We have had a hard battle trying to restore what we believe is a legitimate order in the church," he said. "It has its own legitimacy. But it is an order of servanthood, of people who are to be icons of Christ, and I hope that we will not authorize the use of perpetual deacons as substitutes for priests."

Convention approves study of 'direct ordinations'

If it was good enough for St. Ambrose, St. Leo, and Gregory the Great, it ought to be good enough for the Episcopal Church. So goes the argument in favor of a study of direct ordination (C-026s), approved by this convention.

Under current circumstances, a candidate for ordination proceeds first to the order of deacons, then to the order of presbyters or priests, and then -- if so elected -- to the order of bishops.

It hasn't always been that way. Historically, the order of deacons has always been considered a "servanthood" order, the presbyteral or priesthood order a "sacramental" order, and the episcopal or order of bishops an "apostolic" order. But there are several historic instances of bishops ordained directly to that office without proceeding through the others, among them St. Ambrose of Milan (d. 397 A.D.), St. Leo the Great (d. 461 A.D.) and St. Gregory the Great (d. 604 A.D.). The so-called "transitional diaconate" through which candidates for the priesthood pass is sometimes criticized as "muddying the waters" with regard to the true function of deacons.

Others say it is necessary for priests to receive the "grace" of the servanthood bestowed with the diaconate on their way to higher orders.

The legislation approved by convention requests that the Council for the Development of Ministry and the Standing Liturgical Commission study and report to the next General Convention on ways to ordain candidates to the specific holy order to which they have been called.

Other actions approved by convention related to clergy issues include the following resolutions, which now become church policy:

- Arrange transfer of assets for pensions of Anglican Communion clergy who have emigrated to the United States (C-034s).
- Ask for early intervention for reconciling disagreements affecting the pastoral relationship (D-193).
- Authorize the General Board of Examining Chaplains to charge a fee for the General Ordination Examinations not more than \$300 per candidate. According to the resolution, the fee can be waived for qualified candidates who are unable to pay it (A-079).
- Commend the work of the Cornerstone Project on clergy deployment and wholeness (B-035).
- Consent to the election of a bishop coadjutor for the Diocese of Dallas (B-055).
- Consent to the election for a suffragan bishop for the Diocese of South Dakota (B-018).
- Consent to the election of a bishop coadjutor in the Diocese of Easton (B-016).
- Direct the Board of Theological Education to develop alternative programs and locations for ordained and lay theological education sensitive to cultural diversity (A-225a).
- Direct the Council for the Development of Ministry to "facilitate the development of educational materials and training programs . . . to help eliminate discrimination in deployment throughout the church against clergywomen, clergy of color, ethnic clergy, and clergy with disabilities" (A-090s).
- Direct Board for Theological Education to establish new means for the education of persons recruited for the specialized area of new congregational development (A-064a).
- Encourage the settlement of disputes within the church by peaceful dispute resolution processes (C-033a).
- Request review of guidelines for accepting congregations into the Episcopal Church, so that the pastor of such a congregation may be ordained priest at the same time the congregation is accepted (A-075).
- Request the Council for Development of Ministry to continue review of Title III canons (A-134).
- Continue and continue funding the Council for the Development of Ministry (A-138).
- Restructure the membership of the Board for Church Deployment (A-037).
- Support new administrative structure for coordinating church deployment (A-036s).
- Prepare a paper on the matter of direct ordination and consider canonical changes necessary (C-026s).

--Michael Barwell contributed to this report.

91160

Lay employees must get pensions, health benefits, Convention says

by David Skidmore

Lay employees will no longer be second-class citizens in the Episcopal Church when it comes to employee benefits.

In one of its final actions, the General Convention passed a measure (D-165a) mandating retirement benefits for all lay employees who work 1,000 hours or more for dioceses, congregations, and other "ecclesiastical organizations or bodies." A related measure, (A-137s) requiring health and life insurance coverage for lay employees, also was approved.

The pension resolution sets a deadline of January 1, 1993, for congregations "and any societies, organizations, or bodies" of the church to initiate coverage for lay employees working a minimum of 1,000 hours. Employers have the option of providing the coverage through the Episcopal Church Lay Employees Retirement Plan, administered by the Church Pension Fund, or an equivalent plan. They also are given leeway for setting eligibility standards. Employers have the option of requiring employees to be 21 and to have worked continuously for one year before being enrolled in the pension program.

Depending on whether the plan is a "defined benefit" or a "defined contribution" plan, the employer's share can vary from 9 percent to 5 percent. Under the 5 percent defined contribution plan, employers must also agree to match up to 4 percent of employee contributions.

For several deputies, the decision amounted to an emancipation proclamation. "This is a matter of justice and equity," said the Rev. Kenneth Snyder of Olympia. "It's time we demonstrate our willingness to join the secular world in providing for the retirement of lay employees."

In the business world, according to Deputy Robert Gaines of Northern California, employers award benefits to some employees but not to others. The fact that the church is discriminating by ensuring coverage for its clergy but not its laity is "immoral."

John McLure, deputy from Western Louisiana, sounded a note of reality with a warning. "We'd better be serious about stewardship if we do this," he said. If comprehensive pension coverage depletes parish discretionary funds, then there will be fewer parish dollars fed to the dioceses, he pointed out. And that will produce a ripple effect all the way to offices of the Episcopal Church Center.

While agreeing the time was long overdue for equalization of benefits, Bishop C.I. Jones of Montana said compulsory participation would put smaller churches in a bind. Many of the congregations in his diocese rely on part-time staffing, Jones said. There's simply no room in

their budgets to contribute to pension plans, he said.

One bishop suggested the threshold of 1,000 hours was too low, and proposed amending the resolution to set it at 2,000 hours. Bishop James Krotz of Nebraska, a member of the house's Committee on the Church Pension Fund, said during committee hearings there was testimony that the 1,000 hours was a figure set by the federal government "and that very likely we would be held to that standard."

Both houses passed the life and health insurance measure with little debate. A companion measure to the pension resolution, it directs church bodies to provide life and health insurance coverage -- comparable to that provided to clergy -- to lay employees working a minimum of 1,000 hours. The adopted measure is a substitute from the House of Deputies for a resolution submitted by the Council on Ministry Development which proposed medical, dental, and life insurance coverage for all church lay employees.

91161

'Love feasts' and living water in a dry land: a call to evangelize

by Jan Nunley

"The judgment upon mainline churches is that they could all be better evangelists, if they were prepared to receive the people that God has invited," thundered the Rev. James Forbes at a General Convention open hearing on evangelism. "But many times we want prepackaged Episcopalians as the object of our evangelistic effort," Forbes said.

Forbes, senior pastor of New York's Riverside Church, used story and song -- and silence -- to drive home his point: The good news of Jesus Christ is that all creation is included in God's invitation to a "love feast" -- including people of color, lesbians and gays, and other "outsiders."

Forbes' powerful preaching moved the audience to laughter, shouts, and enthusiastic clapping as he held forth on what he called "the best good news." Calling on the group to "cease listening to me," he paused for a minute in silence for the group to "listen to see if there is a word that God has to say to you," resuming with the singing of the spiritual, "Amen."

Then Forbes launched into his main message, taken from the book of Isaiah and the gospel of Luke: "God wants to get our attention to remind us that God is interested in both nourishing and

fulfilling our lives. God is primarily invested in a big feast that God is arranging for the whole creation . . . This is the best news, the best evangel, in the whole world, as incarnated in Jesus the Christ," he said. "My job as an evangelist is to come to the feast myself, and then feast at the table only long enough to come back to those in the streets and lanes of the city and say that I have a good news message for you."

But not everyone is interested in the "love feast," observed Forbes. "Sometimes the church is not able to be about its evangelistic work because some of us are like the elder brother" in the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15), "so busy maintaining our own system of values, so legalistic in our understanding, so self-righteous in our mode of being, that when the love feast is extended to someone that you don't like -- someone who is different from you, of a different class, orientation, of a different ethnic background -- you can say, 'I ain't coming to that party.'" Mainline churches should be willing to change such things as liturgy and language to accommodate the people God sends, Forbes said, and if they're not, "I'm praying for you."

'Whom should we evangelize?'

Carrying Forbes' theme of inclusivity in evangelism were several speakers who identified themselves as members of Integrity or involved in ministry to lesbians and gays.

"I bring you the question: Whom should we evangelize?" asked the Rev. Jennifer Phillips, deputy from Massachusetts. "Is the reign of God really like a mustard seed, that has grown large enough to be a tree with room for all the birds of the air -- including the odd ducks like you and me -- or is it a closed society?" The Rev. Gary Ost of The Parsonage, a ministry to lesbian and gay San Franciscans, called evangelism "a witness of unconditional love."

Others who testified called for support for various resolutions facing the convention. Favoring a resolution affirming the Decade of Evangelism (A-059), the Rev. Whis Hays of Youth Quest warned against the degeneration of the evangelistic message into "a gospel of self-fulfillment." Two of the speakers were members of what one called "a truly silent minority," the deaf community.

Bishop Christopher Epting of Iowa, vice chair of the Standing Commission on Evangelism, found the testimony "very affirming of what we've done. I'm not sure a whole lot will be changed as a result." Chair Joan Bray of Connecticut thought the testimony was "well thought out" and recognized their report as "inclusive, but very clear" about the centrality of Jesus Christ in evangelism.

The General Convention adopted the following resolutions on evangelism:

- Call the church to continuing commitment to this Decade of Evangelism (A-059a).

- Reaffirm commitment to the fullness and uniqueness of God's self-revelation to humankind in Jesus Christ, while remaining aware of God's self-revelation outside the church (A-060a).
- Call upon dioceses and congregations to give serious attention during the Decade of Evangelism to enrichment of the ministry of word and sacrament in the congregational life of the church (A-061).
- Affirm the continuing development of evangelism ministries among Asiamerican, Black, Hispanic and Native American peoples (A-065a).
- Challenge every diocese to identify and evangelize ethnic groups or immigrant populations that have no indigenous Christian churches (A-067a).
- Direct Mission Operations staff to gather research about ethnic groups in the United States and abroad that have no indigenous churches (A-066a).
- Affirm the ministry of evangelism among the aging (A-070).
- Call upon all dioceses and their congregations to make every effort to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to young people and call them to decisions for Christ (A-069).
- Support the family as a primary participant in the church's evangelism efforts (A-071).
- Commend members of the Anglican Communion who are called to exercise the ministry of evangelism (A-076).
- Provide for licensing of Church Army evangelists by diocesan bishops or the ecclesiastical authority (A-133).
- Request resource materials that will relate 50/50 giving and the Decade of Evangelism (A-190).
- Accept the report of the Standing Commission on Evangelism (D-091a).
- Call for establishing 1,000 new congregations by the year 2000 as part of its commitment to the Decade of Evangelism (D-106).
- Adopt a statement giving thanks for all those who are committed to the work of evangelism (D-012s).

91162

Slain civil rights worker Jonathan Daniels named a martyr in church calendar; Nightingale and others postponed

by James H. Thrall

An extensive lobbying effort on behalf of slain civil rights worker Jonathan Myrick Daniels paid off as both houses approved his inclusion in the church calendar as a martyr (B-006s).

Daniels, a seminarian at the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Massachusetts, was shot to death by a deputy sheriff on August 20, 1965, in Hayneville, Alabama, while trying to protect the life of a young black woman. As with other additions to the church calendar, the decision must be ratified a second time at the next General Convention.

Another decision on a list of honorees who were up for a second reading at this convention -- including Florence Nightingale -- was postponed until the 1994 General Convention (A-118s/a).

Daniels wins praise from bishops

Bishop Douglas Theuner of New Hampshire, who stood at the microphone with Bishop Robert O. Miller of Alabama, his cosponsor of the move to add Daniels to the list of martyrs, called the joint sponsorship of the resolution "a great act of reconciliation."

Daniels was from Keene, N.H., and died in Alabama while working as a civil rights worker, but at the time of his death more than 25 years ago "the mind of the church in those two dioceses was not a common one around the issues over which Jonathan Daniels gave his life," Thuener said.

The bishops of New Hampshire and Alabama at the time, he said, "did not agree as to what the response to his death should be, or how he should be remembered."

The consideration of Daniels was particularly important at this General Convention where "we are focusing on the issue of racism 25 years later still in the life of our church and the life of our nation," Theuner said.

Given the small percentage of minorities in New Hampshire, people there may "think we have no problem with racism because we have no black people," he said. When the question is raised, "Why should we raise up a white person in our calendar when so many people of color gave their lives?" in the civil rights movement, Theuner said, such an action speaks to the people of New Hampshire "who need to know that racism is something that affects all of us."

Bishop Miller stressed that Daniels needs to be remembered as more than just a civil rights worker. "John was not simply a civil rights worker who happened to be a Christian," he said. "He was a person whose mature formation in Christ led him to the prophetic ministry that led him to his death."

Bishop Donald P. Hart of Hawaii said that he was rector of the parish in Keene from which Daniels came. "The people of Keene remember Jonathan not as perfect," he said. Yet "most of all they remember the witness that he made, coming out of a small New England town that in many ways had very little to do with the civil rights movement. He brought that to them in a very special way."

Nightingale defended

Bishop Robert L. Ladehoff of Oregon, chair of the bishops' committee on Prayer Book and Liturgy, reported that the committee was sticking by the recommendation of the Standing Commission on Liturgy that Florence Nightingale not be included in the list of persons up for the second reading. This year's Blue Book had inadvertently printed her name in the list ratified by the commission, forcing an amendment of the Blue Book resolution.

"No one that I talked to would deny the importance of Florence Nightingale," Ladehoff said. "Like many in the calendar, there is much to admire, but there is also a flawed human being."

Ladehoff said the committee was moved by testimony that had been received, "particularly by a letter received from Mary Donovan," (an historian of women's issues in the church and wife of Bishop Herbert Donovan of Arkansas) but felt there were ways to commemorate her without making her a part of the calendar. "We spent considerable time on this," Ladehoff said.

Bishop Otis Charles, however, spoke in defense of Florence Nightingale, calling her a "person who from the very outset of her life was moved by God to do what she did.

"It was out of her leading by God that she was moved to do what no woman of her class and time would have done, which was to move into the sick wards and care for people," he said, dealing with "people who had no status, no place.-- outcasts in society."

Nightingale "took on the whole of the cultural system to prepare a new way for caring for people," Charles said. "She may have been flawed. That is true of all the saints and all of us. Florence Nightingale was a hero among human beings, a woman who dared to lead the way for other women. To exclude her from the calendar is to exclude the victories women have made by simply being willing to be not told no, and to press forward."

Questions raised about commemorations

Retired Bishop John M. Krumm, however, raised questions about how the qualifications for persons to be commemorated are established. "We really are rather fuzzy about when canonization is appropriate," he said. "Some of the names here seemed not to be so much examples of what we call 'heroic sanctity,' as of people who would be nice to honor."

Another woman on the list, Julia Emery, "as far as I know, was not known for heroic sanctity," Krumm observed. "She just developed the United Thank Offering. Well, that's all right. Let's have a resolution saying 'thank you' and honor her. Why do we have to call her a saint?" He proposed that the standing commission report to the interim meeting of the House of Bishops with "a rationale for decisions about this list."

"To include Florence Nightingale in a list of important human beings who have made great contributions to the human race, and especially furthering the cause of nursing is totally appropriate," agreed Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire. "To include her as a saint of the church worthy of emulation in Christian life is a travesty."

Saints preserved them

The bishops voted to refer the entire list of proposed names up for a second reading for addition to the calendar -- with the exception of Thomas Gallaudet and Henry Winter Syle -- back to the Standing Liturgical Commission. That commission will be instructed to report to the next meeting of the House of Bishops in 1992, and to include a study of how people are considered for inclusion in the calendar. The interim bishops' meeting will then develop a recommendation for

the next General Convention. The church asks that additions to the calendar come before two conventions so that the church has a chance to respond.

When the House of Deputies opened debate on the substitute resolution from the bishops, the Rev. Anne Robbins of Southern Ohio observed that, despite the mandate of the 1988 General Convention to find the names of women to include in the calendar, no women passed muster at this year's convention. Committee chair George McGonigle of Texas responded that sufficient biographical material wasn't available to the committee on all of the names.

Then the Rev. Gaylord Hitchcock of Newark moved an amendment to restore Brigid of Kildare, an Irish abbess, and Evelyn Underhill, an English mystic and writer, to the "A" list. During a vote by cards, Marge Christie of the Newark deputation ran from her seat at the rear of the hall to join the Fort Worth deputies two tables forward -- a rare instance of collegiality between the liberal Newark and traditionalist Fort Worth deputations. To laughter and applause, vice president Pam Chinnis deadpanned, "Unity has finally been achieved in this House." The deputies voted to concur with the amendment.

91163

Youth challenge convention by their speeches and presence

by Rachel Roberson

Hearing the response they sought -- that youth are the church of today, not the church of tomorrow -- youth representatives to the General Convention addressed the bishops and deputies on behalf of the 18-member youth presence in Phoenix.

Their stories were poignant but filled with hope for the church.

Beverly Ho-A-Yun, a Chinese-American from San Francisco, told the bishops of discrimination she experienced as a young Asian-American. Ho-A-Yun, 17, said members of minorities in her congregation were passed over at the communion rail and not informed of church events. Several years of exclusion caused her to question her faith and the church, she said. "I felt as if being Chinese was a sin because I wasn't being fairly treated," she told the bishops.

The parish's overt racism stopped after the rector's death, but Ho-A-Yun said she still felt exclusion until she was invited to last summer's national Episcopal Youth Event in Missoula,

Montana. Her experience was so positive, she said, that she is now proud to call herself an Episcopalian. But she will not soon forget her early experiences in the church.

"There are many teen-age minorities out there who are united with God, but are not united with their brothers and sisters of this large Episcopal family and don't know how to solve this problem," she said.

Plea for 'bold, active steps'

Her speech ended with a plea to the bishops, asking them to take "bold, active steps" to ensure that young people of color are included in diocesan events. "It's up to you to see that your congregations are doing their evangelical work of being truly inclusive to non-Anglos of the Episcopal Church," Ho-A-Yun said.

Unity and balance between adults and youth was the subject of Giselle Daniel's speech to the House of Deputies. Citing a passage from 1 Corinthians 12, she likened youth and adults to separate parts of the same body that must work together to succeed. "We have all been baptized into the same spirit, and so there is no division in the body and all its different parts have the same concern for one another," she told the deputies.

According to Daniel, youth and adults must work together in order to reverse the endless cycles of societal diseases such as suicide, rape, and drug abuse.

Pressures can burst bubbles

Blowing soap bubbles to illustrate how the inner and outer pressures of today's world can cause separate bubbles to explode, Daniel suggested that youth and adults work together to keep their "pressures constantly balanced."

"I challenge us to work together and to communicate using the three languages of God given to the human race," she concluded, "the language of faith, the language of hope, and the greatest of these is the language of love."

The speeches were received with enthusiasm and given standing ovations by both houses. The Very Rev. David Collins, president of the House of Deputies, said, "We want to thank you for coming and assure you that the youth are not the church of tomorrow but the church of now."

In legislative activity, the convention resolved to renew the church's commitment to God's gift of children, and make ministry to children a high priority (A-125).

--Rachel Roberson is the youth editor for *Episcopal Life*

91164

Ecumenical dialogues, Anglican visitors remind Episcopalians of the wider church

Deputies and bishops at the 70th General Convention endorsed the continuing participation of the Episcopal Church in the National Council of Churches and encouraged a number of dialogues with other churches, including a new relationship with the Reformed Episcopal Church, as well as traditional black churches -- African Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

The convention affirmed the results of the 22-year dialogue with the Lutherans by accepting the results of the third round of dialogues and establishing a joint commission to study the proposed Concordat of Agreement between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Dioceses were encouraged to appoint ecumenical officers and provide training in the churchwide study of the documents from the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue.

The church will also be asked to study documents from the Church of Christ Uniting (COCU) and explore bilateral dialogue with member churches of COCU to emphasize the importance of worship, study, witness, and evangelism.

Ecumenical participants bring fresh perspectives

For the most part they sat in a special section set aside on the floor of both houses, watching and listening as the Episcopal Church struggled with the issues set before them. On a few occasions, however, the special ecumenical guests brought to the deliberations a fresh perspective, a different viewpoint, even some sharp criticism.

Perhaps the most prominent ecumenical guest was Lord Robert A.K. Runcie, former archbishop of Canterbury. "I cannot say that the actions of the Episcopal Church have always made life easy for an archbishop of Canterbury -- but life should not be easy in these days," Runcie told the House of Bishops in his greeting. He said he felt assured that "whereas you may be doing new things, you care immensely about the unity of the community." And he reminded the bishops that a great deal of attention is focused on their debate and the decisions they make "but even more, toward the temper by which you reach those decisions."

In his sermon at an evening Eucharist, Runcie recounted his excitement at the baptism of a child in a Hispanic mission church the previous Sunday. "Baptism into the death of Christ sounds strange to the world but for us it is profoundly encouraging," he said. In what he call "interfering words," Runcie articulated three hopes for the church: "that we shall presume our opponent's reasoning has something to do with his or her desire to be loyal to the same Christ we want to serve ourselves"; a recognition that matters of loyalty to Christ "cannot always be made clear in a

generation, let alone in a short meeting"; and a wish "that there was not so strong a fashion to tie things up in legislation which does not allow any give for pastoral application."

Runcie's successor, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, and Archbishop of York John Habgood sent greetings to the convention. "We uphold you in our prayers and ask that the Spirit of truth and love will continue to sustain your life in Christ," they wrote.

Many of the ecumenical guests were family members, such as the Most. Rev. Samir Kafity, president-bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East. Also, the Most Rev. George Browne of the Church of the Province of West Africa and bishop of Liberia shared an account of his recent experiences during Liberia's civil war. The Most Rev. Richard Abellon, prime bishop of the newly autonomous Philippine Episcopal Church, reported on recent natural disasters.

Archbishop Michael Peers of the Anglican Church of Canada gave a major address to the open hearing on the environment. Rabbi Robert Kravitz represented the American Jewish Committee and publicly criticized some of the Middle East resolutions. Roman Catholic Archbishop Rembert Weakland brought greetings, and the Rev. Troy Perry, moderator of the Metropolitan Community Church which was meeting in Phoenix at the same time, was introduced to the House of Bishops.

The following resolutions, which now become church policy, were among those passed by the convention on ecumenical issues:

- Accept the report of the Standing Committee on Human Relations on the "Dublin Agreed Statement 1984" (A-042).
- Affirm the document "Implications of the Gospel" as a step toward understanding the meaning of full communion between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (A-049a).
- Appoint representatives to the Joint Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee and direct committee to continue the implementation of the 1982 Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement (B-043).
- Ask financial disclosure from the National Council of Churches of Christ (D-128).
- Authorize for ecumenical worship the trial use of the liturgy "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: A New Text" (A-046a).
- Call for continued Christian-Jewish relationships and preparation of appropriate materials on the subject (D-181).
- Commend the Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue and call for study throughout the church of its theological soundness and ecumenical appropriateness (A-048a).
- Commend the work of retired bishop Arthur Vogel on the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission. Vogel retired from the commission in 1990.(A-044).
- Encourage dioceses to appoint ecumenical officers and provide for their financial support (A-040a).
- Establish a common marriage policy for use within ecumenical relationships (B-032a).
- Establish a joint commission to study the proposed "Concordat of Agreement" between the Lutheran and Episcopal Churches (A-050a).

- Establish ecumenical relationship with Reformed Episcopal Church (A-053).
- Establish formal dialogue with the African Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (A-047).
- Facilitate a study of the Consultation on Church Union document "Churches in Covenant Communion" (A-045).
- Greetings to the Rev. Joan Campbell as she begins her ministry as general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ (A-055).
- Offer thanks for the Episcopal Church's participation and leadership in the seventh assembly of the World Council of Churches (A-056s).
- Provide for Episcopal diocesan ecumenical officers training in the churchwide study of "Toward Full Communion" and the "Concordat of Agreement" (A-051).
- Provide oversight for the church's participation in interfaith dialogue (A-237).
- Recommend cooperation with ecumenical partners in evangelism (A-074).
- Recommit the Episcopal Church as a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ (A-054).
- Send greetings to the Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I (B-054).
- Support an ecumenical agenda initiated by the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (A-039).
- Urge Episcopalians to become better acquainted with the Oriental Orthodox churches (A-041).
- Accept evaluation of document, "God's Reign and Our Unity," and submit evaluation as our response to the Anglican Consultative Council (A-043).
- Refer Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue documents to the Anglican Consultative Council for review by and response from all member churches in the Anglican Communion (A-052).

91165

Visiting bishops call for Episcopalians to care for war-torn world

by Barbara Ogilby

The courage and faith displayed by Christians in war-torn and suffering areas of the world are an inspiration and an incentive to action for Episcopalians, according to four visiting bishops who spoke at a luncheon at the 70th General Convention in Phoenix.

The bishops' remarks resounded like a litany of world catastrophes from the past year, coming from four church leaders who personally have experienced war, famine, or societal stress:

- The Most Rev. George Browne, archbishop of the Church of the Province of West Africa and bishop of Liberia, whose country has been ravaged by civil war and famine. Browne emerged only this winter after surviving the ravages of tribal warfare in Liberia, where he was one of only two church leaders to stay in the capital of Monrovia throughout the conflict.

- The Most Rev. Richard Abellon, prime bishop of the newly autonomous Philippine Episcopal Church, whose clergy and people have suffered through earthquakes, typhoons, and volcanic eruptions.

- The Rt. Rev. Samir Kafity, president bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, where Palestinian Christians and other Christians found themselves in the midst of the Persian Gulf War and the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

- The Rt. Rev. James Ottley, bishop of Panama and vice president of the House of Bishops, who is working with other Christian churches to help Panama rebuild in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion, deposition of that country's dictator, and an earthquake.

'Walked through shadow of death'

Browne vividly described the anxiety of living in a country wracked by civil war. He told of being cut off from family and friends, facing threats of torture and death by armed bands of "freedom fighters." He said he and others were forced to scavenge for leaves and the hearts of palms trees, because food supplies were not allowed through rebel lines. Wheelbarrows, the only "vehicles" available, were used as ambulances for the wounded and dying, Browne said. By the end of October 1990, Browne claimed, 20,000 people had been killed and 750,000 people were displaced.

As conflict raged throughout the country, Browne asked church members to read Psalm 23 slowly three times a day for ten days. "After the crisis," Browne related, "people said they were strengthened [by knowing] that the Lord was still their shepherd, and he was walking with them through the valley of the shadow of death."

Liberia remains divided, with some parts of the country still cut off from the capital, and transportation, businesses, and agriculture are crippled, Browne reported. "We need to begin counseling to help people recover from trauma," he said. "We need help with farming -- seeds and tools." He urged the Episcopal Church, and the Anglican Communion worldwide, to become more visible and aggressive in its relief efforts to Liberia.

Mideast Christians 'crucified'

Bishop Kafity described Christians in the Middle East, many of whom are Palestinian, as "not just carrying the cross: they are crucified."

"For at least 43 years [since Israel became an officially recognized state], they have been searching for peace and the suffering continues," Kafity said.

All people in that region of the world suffered during the Persian Gulf War, Kafity reported, but Palestinians -- already under special restrictions by the Israeli government -- faced unique hardships. At one point, he said, all Palestinians were placed under house arrest for 43

days. Food shortages, even in hospitals and children's homes, were widespread.

"Palestinians seek a home," Kafity said, adding that the partition of the Middle East after World War II occurred "without them having a say where their lands and homes were.

"The church is still there, a symbol of reconciliation and of the new kingdom of God that we hope will be established," Kafity concluded.

String of natural disasters

The new Philippine Episcopal Church, in its brief year and a half as an independent church province, has experienced an earthquake, a typhoon, and volcanic eruptions, according to Bishop Abellon. Communication lines and housing have been destroyed, he said, and many people have been killed.

Abellon thanked the Episcopal Church for "assistance that enabled us to perform our Christian duty serving those in need." The Philippine Church helped refugees relocate in two emergency camps, and evacuees are still living in the cathedral in Manila, he reported.

"These crises have brought us closer," Abellon said. "God has not stayed up there but is incarnate and uses us as members of his body to serve others . . . In the power of his Holy Spirit, we will continue to serve."

Aoellon said he supported the drive to remove the U.S. bases from the Philippines. "To be anti-bases is not to be anti-American," he said. "If the vestiges of colonialism were removed, growth would be enabled," he said. "Cooperation should not be tied into the military but to wider concerns," he said, adding that he hoped the "growing relationship between the U.S. and Philippine churches could show alternative ways we can continue to grow, not pegged to military hardware."

Panama still recovering

Bishop Ottley gave a brief overview of Panama's history, which he described as "born out of" and continuing to live in crisis. The United States helped Panama gain independence from Columbia in 1903, but in exchange the new country signed a treaty ensuring that the Panama Canal would be under U.S. control. For many years Panama was ruled by an oligarchy of 14 families, Ottley explained, who were succeeded by Manuel Noriega, known to be an agent of the CIA since he was 15.

Ottley said that the U.S. turned a blind eye to Noriega's drug-dealing for many years, until they decided to depose him. He described the war against Panama as an example of the "low-intensity conflict" which the House of Bishops condemned in a resolution adopted on July 14. "The only people who win" in such a conflict "are those who sell arms," Ottley said. "Twenty-one

American soldiers were killed, but no one cared about the many [Panamanian] citizens who lost their lives."

In the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Panama, more than a quarter of the population is unemployed, the country's legal system was destroyed, and many advancements in education and housing were lost. In many ways, the relationship between the U.S. and Panama is similar to that of 1903, Ottley said, with the oligarchy back in power.

A recent earthquake in Central America added to the suffering of his people, but Ottley said the crises have brought the Christian churches together to provide relief. "We have a unique opportunity to serve," he said.

How can Episcopalians help?

In answer to a question about what convention-goers should take back to their parishes, Browne endorsed the resolution condemning low-intensity conflict.

Abellon suggested that Episcopalians should ask themselves, "What is the best offering America can give to ease these crises? Will it be [military] hardware?"

Kafity said he was grateful for the support of the Episcopal Church during the Persian Gulf War. Many people visited in a time of danger, which was a "great witness," he said, adding he remains concerned that only a few U.S. leaders determine foreign policy.

Ottley echoed Kafity's call for more involvement in the policy-making process. "The American people are the most generous in the world, but people are often not aware of decisions made by their government. How can you take the government back into your hands?"

General Convention approved other legislation regarding the life of the church throughout the world, which now become church policy:

- Hold up the cross-cultural missionary vocation as a vital expression of the apostolic nature of the church as exemplified by the Volunteers for Mission program and the Episcopal Council for Global Mission (A-068a).
- Accept communicants of the member churches of the Anglican Communion to serve as "missionaries of/to this church" (A-231).
- Endorse guidelines for companion dioceses' relationships (A-236).
- Establish guidelines on autonomous provinces in the Anglican Communion (A-235a).
- Request the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons and the Standing Committee on Structure to consider ways of incorporating Anglican Partners in discussions over loss of diversity in decision-making bodies (A-238a).
- Authorize an additional trial period of six years for creation of the Province of the Andes (C-070a).
- Congratulate Zimbabwe on its Anglican Centenary (D-069).
- Grant the church in Haiti another three-year period to continue research and experience in the Caribbean region (C-065a).

- Request greetings be sent to the Anglican Province of Papua, New Guinea on its 100th anniversary (B-053).
- Extend by three years the trial period for autonomy of the Central Region of America (C-038a).
- Affirm upcoming Partners in Mission II Consultation called by the Episcopal Church (D-103).

91166

Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief seeks new directions after 50 years

by Steve Weston

At this General Convention, the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief celebrated a half century of service to the 121 dioceses of the Episcopal Church and more than 100 countries in the global village, and pledged to chart new directions in relief efforts by alleviating the "root causes" of human suffering.

Speaking to a joint meeting of the House of Bishops and House of Deputies, Bishop Furman C. Stough, executive for the fund, and C. Robertson Trowbridge, said the fund had become a primary vehicle for new mission initiatives after Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning secured its independent operation within the national church program in 1986. Trowbridge, a member of the board of directors and deputy from New Hampshire, recalled Browning's insistence that the fund should "incarnate the compassion which abounds in our church."

During recent responses by the fund to massive flooding in Honduras, havoc caused by Hurricane Hugo in isolated mountain villages of Puerto Rico, and human misery in refugee camps of Palestinian refugees, the fund has provided more than mere blankets and clothing. In addition to relieving the pain and suffering of natural disasters, Trowbridge said the board's directors are committed to putting "our funds to work in ways that eliminate the root causes of misery and suffering, illiteracy, disease, and hunger."

Bishops and deputies witnessed the effectiveness of the fund in a video presentation from the Episcopal Church Center entitled, "Extending the Arms of Christ: Celebrating 50 Years of Service." In one segment of the 30-minute presentation, the speed of relief efforts in the Diocese of Honduras after devastating flooding was contrasted with what Bishop Leopold Frade called a "desperate, living hell" for 10,000 people who lost their homes and their land.

In its first 50 years of service, the fund has dispersed more than \$50 million, with more

than half the amount committed in the last 10 years. Originating within the Department of Social Services in the Diocese of Southern Ohio in 1938, the fund became a national program in 1940 through action of General Convention.

News of catastrophic events often inspires Episcopalians to respond with generous donations, Trowbridge said. In 1990, more than \$3 million in gifts were received from 17,000 donors. The effectiveness of the fund's response ensures that gifts are committed to provide relief as fast as possible, by linking resources with other Anglican relief and support agencies, Stough said.

"We believe the fund is one ministry the national church exercises in our day and time," Stough said. Support from gifts and prayers in the first 50 years ensures, Stough said, that the ministry of the fund belongs to the church at large.

91167

AIDS priority nearly overlooked by convention

by Bruce Campbell

The response of the church to the AIDS crisis is a program priority of the Episcopal Church and, by alphabetical arrangement, informed the first resolutions listed in the Blue Book. But key resolutions on AIDS before the 70th General Convention were passed quickly and late in the legislative flurry.

The Joint Commission on AIDS itself, described in resolution A-001, waited until the day before convention ended to be given new life for the next triennium. Joint commissions, unlike standing commissions, exist one triennium at a time and require General Convention ratification to continue.

Other legislation concerning AIDS/HIV education and anti-discrimination policies hurried through the Houses of Bishops and Deputies on the last two days of convention. Deputies skirmished briefly over a message from the House of Bishops requesting concurrence for AIDS/HIV youth education

The deputies eventually concurred in a voice vote on the resolution, dealing with the creation of sensitive, multicultural HIV/AIDS educational resources for youth (A-005a), after Robert Randolph of Fort Worth protested its content as supporting what he termed "the homosexual lifestyle."

New national strategy

By contrast with the pace of legislation, the National Episcopal AIDS Coalition (NEAC) launched a new churchwide outreach program on the first day of convention, following testimony that the epidemic will claim at least 215,000 lives before the next General Convention.

"AIDS Spoken Here," the new outreach program, is designed to place emphasis upon pastoral care and "challenging the indifference of the human family," NEAC President Holly McAlpen told a news conference.

"We hope to identify parish churches as places of sanctuary, especially during the Decade of Evangelism," Seattle priest Richard Younge, NEAC vice president, added. Also, the program seeks to dispel the myth that AIDS is "old news, or under control," Younge said.

Bishop Barbara Harris of Massachusetts, a new NEAC board member, endorsed the program and its ability to avert "the strain of burnout" among those who have been working in AIDS ministry for some time.

Earlier the morning of the news conference, U.S. Public Health Service specialist Ted Karpf testified before the Joint Committee on Social and Urban Concerns. He stated that some 68,000 people have died with AIDS during the last triennium, and that toll is expected to double by 1993.

Karpf, also a priest in the Diocese of Dallas, testified at the request of federal officials. He urged the committee to endorse all legislation aimed at stopping the spread of AIDS, at enabling those infected with the HIV virus to live as healthfully as possible, and at eliminating discrimination -- especially as the epidemic escalates. AIDS cases increased 34 percent among children and 23 percent among women during the past year, Karpf said. In all, 1.5 million people worldwide are believed to be infected with the HIV virus. Of the 100,000 who have died during the past decade, 75 percent have ranged in age from 22-44.

"That's too many too young," Karpf said, calling upon the church for advocacy and education of all church members -- a call answered by bishops and deputies nearly eight days later.

The convention passed the following resolutions on AIDS policy, which now become the policy of the church:

- Continue the Joint Commission on AIDS (A-001a).
- Affirm the church's AIDS ministry (A-002).
- Continue to prohibit discrimination on the basis of AIDS or HIV infection, and call on every diocese to establish an HIV/AIDS task force (A-003).
- Authorize development of diocesan and congregation-based adult education programs on HIV/AIDS (A-004s).
- Begin culturally sensitive dialogues with and among youth on the HIV/AIDS epidemic especially as it relates to sexual experimentation; prepare multi-language materials (A-005a).

- Encourage ecumenical groups in the National Council of Churches to openly address the HIV/AIDS global epidemic (A-006a).
- Call on all church-related bodies and organizations to review "Ten Principles for the Workplace" on AIDS discrimination and report to the Joint Commission on AIDS; ask Episcopalians to share these principles with their employers and urge adoption (A-007a).
- Define the church's public policy with regard to the HIV/AIDS epidemic (A-008a).
- Ask for early intervention and anonymous testing for the HIV virus (A-009).
- Advocate a comprehensive health care and medical benefits program with emphasis on the needs of persons with acute and chronic conditions and limited self-care capabilities (A-010).
- Remove HIV from the list of diseases warranting entry restrictions into the United States (B-025).
- Call upon the Congress of the United States to seek means to include the particular issues of women and children in the funding and design of AIDS/HIV research, treatment, and experimental protocols (D-096a).

-- Based on reports by Bob Williams in the *Convention Daily*

91168

ECW Triennial challenged to work for justice by Bishop Harris and other speakers

by David Skidmore

It is time for the women of the church to put away their needlepoint and begin serving as advocates for social justice, Bishop Barbara Harris of Massachusetts told more than 500 members of the Episcopal Church Women's (ECW) 40th Triennial meeting.

Harris, speaking at a Eucharist, was one of several who stirred the Triennial during its nine-day meeting that coincided with the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Stating her intent was both to chastise and challenge them, Harris told the Triennial delegates, "It is time -- past time -- for women in the church to begin to do the kind of holistic analysis that will move us away from treating symptoms of problems to attacking the root causes." Harris commended the Triennial delegates on their theme, "Restoring God's Creation to Wholeness," and challenged them to grasp the revolutionary implications of the gospel.

The suffragan bishop of Massachusetts and the first woman bishop in the worldwide Anglican Communion, Harris told Triennial delegates that if they are going to be serious about being leaders, they must come to grips with "the truth of our time and the reality under which we live."

Complacency not helpful

Despite an exponential growth in social problems -- the feminization of poverty, spouse and child abuse, increased drug dependency, teen pregnancy, hunger, and homelessness -- Harris said the response of church women has been complacency. "Faced with that, so many of us continue to deny reality and continue to needlepoint cushions, and redecorate the rectory, and to design or purchase the latest in new altar hats," Harris said. Her stinging indictment was answered with thunderous applause from the several thousand delegates.

This litany of problems can be cured, Harris said, only after we understand they are the result of discrimination "spawned by the twin evils that institutionalize and perpetuate these problems: greed and a lust for power." Christians must recognize the interrelationship of poverty and economics, she added.

Old Testament courage

The Book of Esther contains an apt lesson for women today, said Harris. "Most of us know the story of Esther, the beautiful queen, whose cousin and foster father Mordecai laid on her the responsibility to go to the king's presence on a whim, and in defiance of the law, and to advocate and to plead on behalf of the people." Jews at the time, explained Harris, were threatened with genocide by the king of Persia. Some people have a problem with the story, she said, because Esther was elevated from being a concubine to the position of queen. Others label her as "a powerless pawn in a restricted, oppressive society."

But those judgements are unfair, she said. "I think she was clever and courageous. She risked her life to save her people. She was able to exercise her influence. And she used what she had, to do what she had to do."

Esther's story, a classic example of the struggle for power and dominance, mirrors "some of the things going on in our church and society today," she noted. Church ministers -- whether they wear a clergy collar, staff a diocesan or parish office, or serve as educators, Episcopal Church Women presidents, or United Thank Offering (UTO) custodians -- should not make the mistake of seeing themselves as the "favorites in the king's palace" but as the servants in Caesar's household.

Harris's sermon echoed the opening address of outgoing ECW President Marjorie Burke. Burke challenged delegates "to set things right that separate us from the love of God and from each other." She reported that her travels to all nine provinces, 20 dioceses, and throughout the Anglican Communion has strengthened her own spiritual journey. "I've been in places where I've seen oppression and how people live their faith, and that's been an inspiration and a powerful effect on me," she said.

'A crisis in our churches'

In an address to the Triennial, the Rev. Marie Fortune referred to the increased cases of sexual misconduct by clergy as "a crisis in our churches." Fortune, a minister in the United Church of Christ, reported the findings of a study in her denomination which indicated that clergy were more likely to abuse the pastoral relationship than professional counselors. "The pain of being betrayed by one representing God causes that person to feel betrayed by God and the church," she said.

Fortune referred to the problem of sexual misconduct by clergy as "de-evangelization. I wonder how many people we lose each year because we haven't dealt with this," she said.

In a separate presentation, the Rev. Peter Kreidler, a self-proclaimed "minister for the environment" from the Diocese of Los Angeles, called on members of the Triennial to turn their attention to another crisis facing the church -- the environment. "I am not an alarmist -- I am a realist," Kreidler said. "We're talking about a window of 20 to 40 years," he said, concerning the future of the ecosystem.

"I'd like to see all the bishops of this church attend an environmental workshop," Kreidler said. "A bishop pastors his diocese -- not just its people, but the land and other creatures as well." Kreidler led Triennial delegates in a special exercise to design "a 21st-century eco-sound church."

UTO responds to crises

Near to the heart of the ECW Triennial meeting, the United Thank Offering (UTO) ingathering was the centerpiece for the closing Eucharist of the General Convention. A parade of women representing every diocese in the Episcopal Church deposited envelopes representing a contribution to the UTO.

The UTO, a ministry of the ECW, gathered more than \$3 million since last July -- a sum amassed largely from nickels and dimes deposited in UTO's familiar blue coin boxes since last July. The offering will be dispersed by early fall to more than 132 projects that support the work of the church in the United States and abroad.

Delegates to the triennial concluded their meeting with the installation of new officers: Ginger Paul of Western Louisiana as the new president, Mary Leigh Armstrong of Virginia and Helen Young of California as vice presidents, Helen Young of Sybil Fickle of Georgia as treasurer, and Emily Wilson of Connecticut as secretary. Nancy Broadwell from the Diocese of East Carolina was installed as the chairperson of the UTO.



news features

91169

Report of the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council to the 70th General Convention

Remarks of Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, July 12, 1991

Before I say anything else, I want to offer my personal word of thanks to the men and women of this Executive Council, and especially to the vice-chairman, Dean David Collins. Their creativity, commitment and hard work over this triennium have been abundantly on display during this past hour. I am grateful not only for their toil and sweat, and for their loyalty, but also for the integrity they have displayed as a diverse body committed above all to the good of this church. There have been some rough places in the road these past three years, but they have walked that road with grace. A good part of that graceful journey has been under the leadership of David Collins. He has won the respect and affection of everyone in this church over the past six years, and we are going to miss him sorely in the chair. We owe both him and the other members of the Executive Council a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Six years ago, to my astonishment, I was elected your Presiding Bishop. The six years have passed more swiftly than I could have imagined, but the joy and wonder have been deep and abiding.

A great part of that joy has been in coming better to know you, the people of the Episcopal Church, and in sharing your ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ. You are a faithful, hard-working and generous people! You have given me heart and courage to proclaim the gospel and to bear witness as the Presiding Bishop. And you have taught me lessons, valuable lessons on which we can all build as we continue to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Let me share a few of the lessons I have learned among you.

First, I have learned, or re-learned, in countless ways, that the church of Jesus Christ is more than the sum of its parts.

Gathered here in Phoenix, we rejoice that our church is a mosaic made up of a rich variety

of gifts. Diversity is a quality we treasure. Sometimes we are self-consciously and even defiantly different! Yet, by faith, we, the many and varied and different, can proclaim with the apostle Paul that in Christ we are one. The many are one, for the creator has so arranged our diverse members that the body is a functional whole, one pleasing to God and showing forth God's glory in the world.

Interdependence of all parts

There have been times when the body has seemed out of shape. Usually that has been when, to echo Paul, an eye has said to a hand, "I have no use for you." Or an ear has complained, "Because I am not a foot I do not belong to the body." But that is foolishness, and we are given the grace in our better moments to see and feel the interconnectedness and interdependence of *all* parts of our body.

Frederick Denison Maurice, the great English theologian of the last century, once said that Anglicanism has a special vocation "to hold together things which were never meant to be separated." I have tried in humility to make this a watchword of my own ministry as your Presiding Bishop. I now know that the landscape looks different from 815 Second Avenue than it did from the beautiful islands of Hawaii. I can see that parts of the body that once seemed quite self-sufficient cannot in fact survive without other parts. "If all were a single member, where would the body be?"

It was Maurice who noted that the diverse movements in the church of his day were generally right in the things they affirmed, but wrong in the things they negated. This observation made in nineteenth-century England bears up remarkably well in twentieth-century America. The many movements of our church, the advocacy groups and the caucuses and the synods, are to my mind generally right in what they positively assert and sometimes wrong in what they negate. This is simply to say that while no one group has a monopoly on the truth, advocacy groups spring into existence in order to uphold a partial truth in danger of being neglected or forgotten. We do well to listen carefully to each other, then, even as we resist reducing every mystery of our faith to simple slogans.

A mission to carry out

History does have a way of repeating itself. Arguments about sin and sinner, about orthodox and heretic, about who is and who is not to be ordained, crop up with regularity. Jesus once said, "you have the poor with you always." We also have with us always the pressing questions of institutional order and procedure. *But we cannot be limited by such questions*, important as they are. For the church is more than the sum of its parts, and the church has a gospel to proclaim, a mission to carry out. The world little knows and little cares about our housekeeping,

for it writhes in its own pain and brokenness. Woe be to us if we are not clear about our mission!

I have learned that the public witness of our national church *does* make a difference.

Six years ago, and then again three years ago, we, together with other churches in America, stood firmly in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in South Africa. The evil system of apartheid is now on its last legs and will soon be history. I am convinced our consistent and firm witness is helping to bring apartheid down. I am convinced the sanctions we have supported have been effective and should be continued until our partners in South Africa suggest otherwise. I am very disappointed that the President has so quickly abandoned these sanctions despite my recent request not to move hastily, before all conditions have been met. I therefore call on this Convention to send the clear message that we have not abandoned our partners.

I am told that the Episcopal Church operates more soup kitchens than any other denomination in the country. But we do more: we actively advocate on behalf of the poor and homeless, the economically and racially oppressed and those afflicted by AIDS and countless other social ills. We not only reach into the river of despair and rescue people who are drowning, we also move upstream to see who is throwing them in! And it makes a difference! You have just heard stories of the difference it makes from members of your Executive Council.

Christians in the Middle East were heartened and given strength by the remarkably unified witness of our North American churches against the rush to war in the Persian Gulf. I know that for some of you it was difficult to see your Presiding Bishop in the forefront of such a witness. But it made a positive difference in the lives of our Middle Eastern sisters and brothers in the faith, particularly those of our own partner church in the Diocese of Jerusalem. Living in a largely Muslim world, often themselves held in suspicion by their neighbors, these Middle Eastern Christians were able to point to the voice of the church in the United States as a morally distinct voice, anchored in Christian faith and spoken from the freedom of a democratic environment. No witness from the West could have had a more positive evangelistic impact than this.

Advocating for God's new order

Now, in a post-cold-war, post-Gulf-war world, the church must not grow timid in advocating for God's new order. Prophets are needed, and God will raise them up, even from among us. These will be prophets who are also evangelists, bold proclaimers of the new life in Christ. Do not shrink from that call when God lays it upon you. It may be a call to resist the spiritually deadly lure of consumerism, which so afflicts our society. It may be a call to resist the corrosive effects of lives devoted solely to maximizing material profit. The communist regimes of Eastern Europe have fallen, but this is no time for triumphalism and complacency in the West. Now is the time for humility, for a great mantle of leadership has been cast upon us as a nation. Now is the time for careful stewardship of the precious life on earth that we ourselves embody.

Now is the time to seek and serve Christ in all creation.

I have learned, finally, that it is to the example of Jesus we must ever look.

Six years ago I called for a more inclusive and more compassionate church. I declared there would be no outcasts in this church. In the years that have ensued, I have been amazed at the number among us who consider themselves to be outcasts! I have been amazed at the fear that creates outcasts - a fear of difference and diversity, a fear that obscures the faces of our brothers and sisters and makes them seem the faces of strangers.

But the good news is that we have no cause for fear of difference. Difference is of the essence of creation. God created difference, and God called the creation good. This is a cause for celebration, not a cause for fear. We honor God as we honor God's creation, in all its wonderful difference and diversity.

Today, at midpoint in my ministry as your Presiding Bishop, I renew my call for a more inclusive and compassionate church, where none need feel themselves excluded from full participation for fear of being different. I do this in the name of Jesus, whose perfect love cast out fear, whose ministry was marked above all by merciful compassion and gracious inclusiveness.

The ministry of Jesus is our ministry. It is the one ministry to which we are all ordained by baptism. It is to the ministry of Jesus alone we must ever look. The church catholic is marked by its acknowledgement of the living Christ, a person, not by its acknowledgement of an idea or a system. Ideas and systems come and go, but the compelling figure of Jesus remains, the one who "came not to be served but to serve."

Thirty years ago, Martin Luther King had a dream. It was a powerful dream, and it made a difference. Dreams can make a difference, for we may encounter in our dreams angels of the Lord.

Do you remember these words of a contemporary of Martin Luther King? "Some see things as they are, and ask why. I dream things that never were, and ask why not."

Be bold in dreaming

Let us be bold in dreaming, my dear friends. Let us dream things that never were, and ask why not.

Let us dream of a church that refuses to settle its disputes and divisions by legislation, that refuses to accomplish with law what only the gospel can do. What difference would it make if we held in creative tension our partial claims on the truth, trusting the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth? Would we not thereby "hold together [the] things which were never meant to be separated?" If it would make a difference, then let us begin by a systematic, critical examination of the way decisions are made in our church. Our life together as a Christian community, our witness together as servants of Jesus Christ and of one another, is too important to be torn apart by binding decisions made in the heat of partisan debate.

Let us dream of a church that recognizes differences as God-given and God-cherished. Let us dream of a church whose members recognize the face of Jesus in those most unlike themselves. Let us dream of a church that resolutely refuses to allow racism a place in its internal life. What a difference it would make! Would not our unity be unshakable? Let us begin by ensuring that our congregations and communities and governing bodies are inclusive and accessible to all, spacious and hospitable havens for any who hunger spiritually and physically.

Let us dream of a church in partnership with every living being on this planet. Would it not make a difference if we consistently and lovingly honored life, from its inception to its end? If it would make a difference, let us begin by challenging every system that would cheapen life, that would shackle the powerless to lives of poverty, crime and drugs, that would consign future generations to an earth abused and degraded.

Let us dream of a church that works resolutely for world peace and refuses to see justice sacrificed to expediency. Let us dream of a church that speaks out boldly and with authority on the place of military spending and armaments in our national life. Would such a church not make a difference? If it would make a difference, then let us begin by joining a national debate to redirect the foreign policy goals of our government and our commerce to ends more worthy of the great nation we are. Let us be faithful stewards of the rich wisdom of our tradition, so that a distinctively Christian moral voice does not fail to be heard in our land.

Let us, finally, dream of a church that cherishes and honors its young people, that cares enough to do unyielding spiritual battle with the destructive values of our society. Would it not make a difference if our children learned peace instead of war, if they learned the joy of sharing rather than the addictive habits of consumption? If it would make a difference, let us begin by modeling for them in our own personal and institutional lives the example of Jesus. And then let us show our confidence and faith in our young people by seriously equipping and empowering them for mission. There can be no more pressing and important task in our church today!

A place at the table for all

A church that resists settling its differences by legislation, seeking instead a consensus forged by the work of the Holy Spirit; a church that celebrates difference and makes a place at the table for all; a church that enters into partnership with all creation, choosing life over death; a church that struggles unceasingly for peace with justice; a church that honors its young by entrusting them with God's mission. Is this not the very church of Jesus Christ?

My dear friends, we can dream of such a church and we can look to the future in confidence and hope. We can do so because we know, come what may, God is in charge. God is faithful to the creation and will not abandon it. The same God who brought the children of the covenant out of captivity and went before them into the promised land still goes before us. The

same God who raised up Jesus from the dead still raises us from the death that surrounds and threatens us. The same God who sent the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, comforts us still, and will yet guide us into all truth. Ours has been a wonderful heritage, and ours will be a wonderful future, because "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

91170

Sermon by Lord Runcie at the General Convention

The following is the text of the sermon delivered by the former archbishop of Canterbury, the Rt. Rev. the Rt. Hon. Lord Robert A.K. Runcie of Cuddesdon, to the General Convention, Phoenix, Arizona; July 18, 1991.

"If we have been united with Christ in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

Among the memories of this week, these seven days of creation in convention, I will treasure for ever that Sunday baptism of Benjamin Thomas at San Pablo. We crowded into the mission church. Hispanic songs, Native American dress made a glorious mingling. Solidarity brought honored veterans from Mexico and Nicaragua.

Old friends signalled encouragement to me. A gentle lobby gingerly raised their banner and slipped into the official procession.

Un solo senor, una sola fe, un solo bautismo. They responded to my Spanish with forgiving smiles -- though I was delighted to be told subsequently that an eight-year-old bilingual child had been heard to whisper, "Mom, he speaks Spanish better than English."

It would be hard to imagine any cause that could win the unanimous vote of such a crowd -- yet here we were, drawn together by God's gift of baptism. And there, in the midst, undaunted by this invasion, the proud local family beamed on their Benjamin Thomas. Biblical names to be sure for a blessing and the beginning of a pilgrimage of faith.

Tonight we pause in the hectic days of final amendments. . . to amendments to amendments to amendments. . . to be renewed in the blessing of our baptism and to be reconciled for our common pilgrimage of faith.

"If we have been united with Christ in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

Centered on the cross

Baptism into the death of Christ sounds strange to the world but for us it is profoundly encouraging. More encouraging because less limited than the "happy family" image. The promise that Christ will take us through the manifold deaths of the world is deeper. Death to egotism, self-interest, self-indulgence -- through the distortions, put-downs and failures of human exchange -- and at the end through physical death itself.

The Christian religion is unique for it is centred on the cross, because the richest experiences in life arise not from neat harmonies but where there is something askew and what is askew is faced and transformed and something richer emerges. Our hope is in the God who brings life out of death.

Nor can we forget that faith in the God of Jesus Christ means that we begin from a point of weakness and not from a position of strength -- a vulnerable baby; a wandering teacher and his ramshackle group of quarrelling, self-preoccupied friends; a betrayal and a scattering of the company; an excruciating death; and, like the borrowed manger at the beginning, so a borrowed tomb at the end. And yet out of the bits and pieces of his incarnate life he wove a garment of salvation so that we may say, "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ."

In these fragments, in these crumbs from the table, we learn the hard lessons of faith.

And so, to the Bethlehems of your rural communities, take back eyes of expectation. In the turmoil of lives lived with racism or AIDS or discrimination or poverty, sound the voice of determination. In the congregations of the prosperous, push out the limits of neighbourliness. And on the barren Calvary of the inner city, sow seeds of hope. For our God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

Strong then in this faith we ought to give thanks for one another. What in fact makes the big world manageable for little people like most of us are the bonds of affection and interdependence that connect and reconcile us with each other and unite us in the body of Christ.

We all know in one way or another the isolation that often accompanies the preaching of the gospel of truth, and it makes our daily thanksgiving for each other our duty and our joy.

Building of bridges

There is no part of the Anglican Communion that has invested more generosity and imagination than you have done into the building of bridges and the targeting of tasks for our common life in that Communion. I speak here of what I know. Among the architects of the Communion I venerate Stephen Bayne, who once wrote, "Our unity lies not in our thinking alike, but in our acting together".

All over the United States I am conscious of the way in which you have supported my envoy, Terry Waite, during these difficult years. His family have been steadied and upheld. And

that is a visible answer to your prayers which will surely one day bear the fruit that we all long for in the return of the hostages and the end of the injustices which continue to scar what we call the Holy Lands and of which Bishop Samir Kafity has spoken so movingly.

No communion that has produced bishops like Trevor Huddleston and Desmond Tutu; or faithful servants like Florence Tim Oi Li; or martyrs like Janani Luwum and Jonathan Daniels; or evangelists like Festo Kivengere can be said to be lacking the full grace of God and the fruits of his spirit.

Yet we are incomplete, and need the discipline and order, the charismatic word, and selfless compassion which often put us to shame in many other traditions. Above all, we need to reflect the reconciliation we are called to proclaim.

We were all warned that Phoenix would be hot in more senses than one. We have not been disappointed. But the Holy Spirit leads us into truth, as in everything else, through relationship, by our staying in discourse with those whose views may appal us, without rubbishing their spiritual integrity.

The spirit of truth is also the spirit of love. That was St. Paul's remarkable insight. The spirit of truth is also the spirit of love, the one who rescues faith from being turned into the poison of bigotry.

Three things that I long for in your church and mine.

1) That we shall presume our opponent's reasoning has something to do with his or her desire to be loyal to the same Christ we want to serve ourselves.

2) We shall recognize that what is and is not a matter of fundamental loyalty to Christ can not always be made clear in a generation, let alone in a short meeting. The tension between the responsibility to be holy and apostolic and the responsibility to be one and catholic, open to all, seems to be inescapable and to demand heroic patience. We are called to maintain our honesty in following the Lord, not simply to prosecute successful campaigns.

3) In both our churches I could wish that there was not so strong a fashion to tie things up in legislation which does not allow any give for pastoral application. St. Paul had strong convictions and a hot temper but he is quite unqualified in condemning inter-Christian litigation. "It is a defect in you at the best of times," he says, that there should be quarrels among you. He says, "Why do you not prefer to put up with wrong, or suffer loss? . . . Let your forbearance be known to all people."

Well, there! I have said my interfering words. But they come from the heart of someone who longs to defend your church with all its tremendous gifts from the dangerous effects of fierce but narrow loyalties.

Christ's gift to us

Now we who give thanks to God for our faith and for each other will give thanks finally for the whole creation that God has called us to serve. Our commitments to a world in all its brokenness and in all its beauty we shall proclaim in a few minutes as representatives of each diocese bring to the altar the United Thank Offering -- itself a thanksgiving for blessings received as well as a sign of a vocation to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, bind up the wounded. The world is also Christ's gift to us -- we are not called to fear it or shun it, to dominate it or romanticize it.

"We have only one world. Is it not worth our love?"

To love it in all its complexities we need to attend to the ecological threat, or to the use of new powers placed in human hands by biological development - without rushing into superficial and final judgements.

There is a "liberalism" -- a vague word, much debated-- there is a liberalism which is brash and concerned to accommodate faith to contemporary fashions of thought. But there is also a "liberalism" which, to use T.S. Eliot's phrase, is "continent in affirmation," because there is a mystery at the heart of all things calling for reverence and awe rather than shallow and slick predictions.

The truth about our world -- like the truth about ourselves -- is sometimes hard to bear. And yet here and there the tenacity of the faith of a few solves a burning question, or takes a small step towards justice, or wins a victory over prejudice. And the life of the resurrection breaks into a world that drags the chains of death.

Jesus wept, for public things like Jerusalem, and for private things like the death of his friend Lazarus. And like Jeremiah he was "filled with indignation" as he encountered human outrage perpetrated in the name of religion.

The world continues to weep and so shall we. Yet even in this weeping there is the sign of the victory of God. The promise to us is not that we shall not weep; the promise is that God will at last wipe away every tear from our eyes.

Patient realism

My closing words should come from someone who has in spirit played a large part in this convention and that is Martin Luther King. In another time, at another place, at the end of a long march for freedom, King spoke as he often did of his conviction in the present moment and of his hope for the future. They remain for us, whatever the cause we have at heart and which we brought with us to this convention, words we need to heed for patient realism in the present as well as bright hopes of the future.

"I know you are asking today 'How long will it take?' I come to say to you this afternoon

